



## Drumbeat: May 20, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on May 20, 2011 - 10:30am

### [Energy Department approves first-ever liquid natural gas exports from Louisiana](#)

NEW ORLEANS — The Energy Department has cleared the way for a terminal in southwestern Louisiana to export a portion of the U.S.'s burgeoning supply of natural gas.

The terminal was originally built to import natural gas during shortages, before supplies skyrocketed because of vast discoveries in shale rock formations.

The Energy Department said this marks the first time an exporter has been allowed to send natural gas from the lower 48 states as LNG to all U.S. trading partners.

### [US natgas rig count slides to near 16-mth low](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The number of rigs drilling for natural gas in the United States slid by eight this week to near a 16-month low of 866, data from oil services firm Baker Hughes showed on Friday.

### [Refining Capacity An Overhang For Oil & Gas Majors](#)

Chevron's refining profit margins could remain suppressed if excess refinery capacity issues continue to impact the industry. The CEO of Valero Energy commented that excess capacity exists in refineries in several regions including North America, Western Europe and Japan despite several refinery closures. [1] We believe that Chevron's competitors like Exxon Mobil, ConocoPhillips, BP and Anadarko are also aware of the situation.

### [Gas stations: We're the gouging victims](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- -- Think you're mad that gas prices are still high, even as oil prices are falling? Gas station owners in New York, Maryland and other states are furious about that, too, and they're blaming their suppliers for gouging them.

And some state attorneys general are taking notice.

### [Smuggling hits gasoline supplies in Riyadh region](#)

RIYADH: Shortage of gasoline type 95 in some regions in the Kingdom may develop into a crisis if suppliers do not quickly inject enough of it to the gas stations, local Arabic daily Al-Riyadh newspaper reported Tuesday. Especially in Riyadh region, there is a supply shortage.

### [Aramco assures users no shortage of premium gasoline](#)

DHAHRAN: Saudi Aramco has assured users of Premium 95 grade of gasoline that there is no shortage and that the market is adequately supplied.

In a written statement, Saudi Aramco denied reports appearing in the local media that Premium 95 gasoline is in short supply, especially in Riyadh.

### [Saudi Aramco slashes June butane exports by a third on domestic demand](#)

Singapore (Platts) - Saudi Aramco has slashed by 33% the volume of butane slated for exports on a contractual basis to its term customers for June, a Tokyo-based source familiar with the company's intentions said Thursday.

### [NOCK turns gaze to strategic oil reserve](#)

Plans by Government to put up strategic oil reserves have started to gather momentum after the National Oil Corporation of Kenya (NOCK) began the search for a consultant to undertake a feasibility study on the modalities of developing national strategic petroleum reserves.

### [Is BP's latest fiasco evidence of Russian law or Russian chess?](#)

Are we to believe President Dmitry Medvedev, who says that the collapse of BP's blockbuster oil deal in Russia is all a simple matter of the rule of law -- that CEO Bob Dudley was violating a contract, and that isn't done in Russia? One might reply, Since when? But this is what is baffling about the latest turn in BP's long saga of suffering -- one does not know whether Russia has suddenly gone legal, or whether we are watching a dimension of the run-up to the country's 2012 presidential election.

### [Three Reasons Oil Will Trade Above \\$100](#)

The price of oil has been very volatile in recent weeks but one investor believes over the medium term there are good reasons for crude prices to remain above \$100 a barrel.

### [Syrian forces shoot dead 30 in protests - lawyer](#)

(Reuters) - Syrian security forces shot dead at least 30 demonstrators on Friday during protests that broke out across the country in defiance of a military crackdown which has killed hundreds of people, a rights activist said.

### [NATO intercepts Libya-bound oil tanker](#)

NATO says it has intercepted an oil tanker it had reason to believe was set to deliver fuel for use by Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's military forces.

The ship was intercepted on Friday hours after the alliance sunk eight Libyan warships in an attack said to be the broadest on Libya's naval forces since the alliance joined the conflict.

### [Eni, UniCredit to meet Libyan rebels -- sources](#)

(Reuters) - Italian oil and gas group Eni SpA and Italian bank UniCredit SpA will meet Libyan rebels to discuss a possible resumption of oil exports to Italy, two sources close to the operation told Reuters.

### [Scottish Wind Farms Paid to Shut Down Generation](#)

In April, six Scottish wind farm companies were paid £300,000 (US\$485,000) to shut down generation. The problem? Over a two-day period they were producing *too much* electricity. UK wind power groups were cock-a-hoop. At last, a good news wind energy story *not* built on the quicksand of fanciful claims to “free” energy, for once based on the hard math of actual production.

### [Living buildings, living economies, and a living future](#)

At a recent conference, I saw the potential for blending two of the most exciting emerging movements of our time—the living building and the living economies movements. A vision of the combination of these two movements energized me with renewed hope that we humans can end our isolation from one another and from nature—that we can move forward to achieve a prosperous, secure, and creative human future for all.

### [U.S.: Al Qaeda has interest in strikes on energy infrastructure](#)

Washington (CNN) -- The Department of Homeland Security and the FBI have warned police across the United States that al Qaeda has a "continuing interest" in attacking oil

and natural gas targets, a department spokesman said Friday.

The warning came as a result of information seized during the May 2 raid that killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan, a U.S. official said.

### [Government to develop Oil Shock Response Plan](#)

Energy and Climate Change Secretary Chris Huhne yesterday agreed to develop an 'Oil Shock Response Plan', following a meeting with the UK Industry Taskforce on Peak Oil and Energy Security (ITPOES).

The group, which was formed by Arup, B&Q, Buro Happold, Solarcentury, SSE, Stagecoach and Virgin, and campaigns for greater awareness of the economic threat presented by dwindling oil supplies, said that the meeting had proved "constructive" and had helped to advance the energy security dialogue.

### [Repsol to Begin Offshore Cuba Drilling Later This Year](#)

Saipem-owned semisubmersible Scarabeo 9 is set to leave Keppel Shipyard in Singapore next month or July and arrive offshore Cuba sometime in September to drill the Jaguey prospect for Repsol in 5,300 feet of water, a little bit deeper than the Macondo well, said Jorge Pinon, a visiting fellow with the Florida International University Latin America and Caribbean Center's Cuban Research Institute.

### [BP told it must break itself up or risk takeover](#)

BP chief executive Bob Dudley has been warned that he must break up his huge oil business into three separate parts to increase its stock market value or face the possibility of a takeover by the Russians or Chinese.

### [Indonesian Govt to Hunt for More Oil in The East](#)

Unexplored oil and gas reserves in eastern Indonesia will play a vital role in securing the country's energy needs in the future, therefore more investment is necessary to develop the area, a minister said.

"As many oil and gas fields are maturing -- continuing their natural decline -- we're optimistic that frontier and deep water areas, which are mostly located in the eastern part of Indonesia, will contribute significantly to future production," Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Darwin Zahedy Saleh said in a speech at the opening ceremony of "The 35th Indonesian Petroleum Association (IPA) Annual Convention and Exhibition" at the Jakarta Convention Center.

## [Peak...Everything](#)

We are all familiar with all the hullabaloo in recent years over Peak Oil. Dozens of books and websites devoted an enormous amount of space to scaring the pants off of us. In a few years, we would be all be sitting in a dark, cold room without access to “Dancing with the Stars”. Man ...that will be a bummer. Before you get your blood pressure back under control, I’m here to tell you the Peak Oil is just the beginning. The World is facing more peaks that it can handle in the next few decades.

## [John Michael Greer: The tyranny of the temporary](#)

For just short of a year now, my posts here have focused on exploring one extensive set of options for dealing with the crisis of industrial civilization – the toolkit that came to maturity in the organic gardening and appropriate technology movements of the Seventies, and has been more or less sitting on a shelf since that time, being roundly ignored even by those people who thought they were pursuing every available response to peak oil. The process of hauling those tools down off the shelf and handing them out isn’t quite finished yet, but before we go on to the last round of unpacking, I want to talk about another side of the social process that put them on the shelf in the first place.

That dimension of our predicament was pointed up by a commenter who responded to part of last week’s post by suggesting, among other things, that people would still be getting their food from supermarkets for long enough that anyone alive today doesn’t need to worry about other options. It’s not an example that gets brought up often; still, the same assumption that current ways of doing things will remain in place indefinitely is an important reason why so many otherwise prudent and intelligent people to ignore the signs that their lifestyle is getting ready to terminate itself with extreme prejudice. A hard look at the logic behind it is certainly in order.

## [Reinventing democracy, reclaiming the commons: A progressive dialogue on the future of Canada](#)

We face globe-threatening crises -- climate change, species extinction, a looming water shortage catastrophe, more economic disasters created by finance capital, peak oil, and the relentless growth of consumer culture. But we have not created organizations or movements that can address these issues effectively. It seems that only the equivalent of a cultural revolution -- a movement to counter consumerism -- will address many of these issues and make political change possible. But it is unclear how that will happen.

## [Drought in US, EU stressing crops, farmers](#)

PARIS/CHICAGO — Drought from Paris, France to Paris, Texas has farmers and grain dealers looking upwards. The farmers are looking to the skies for rain and the dealers are wondering where rising grain prices are going to stop.

U.S. wheat prices are on their way to their biggest weekly gain and European benchmark wheat futures have jumped just under 30 percent in the past nine weeks as wheat belts on both sides of the Atlantic show signs of irreversible drought damage.

...Food security is a global concern and the UN's food body has issued repeated warnings about food price inflation since last year's Black Sea drought.

Rising food prices helped fuel the unrest which toppled the heads of Egypt and Tunisia earlier this year, triggering protests in many Arab countries.

### [US Gasoline Sales Fell In April For First Time This Year - API](#)

HOUSTON -(Dow Jones)- Gasoline sales in April fell for the first time this year as higher prices turned U.S. consumers away from the pump, the American Petroleum Institute said Friday.

Gasoline sales averaged 8.9 million barrels a day in April 2011, down 2.2% from the same month last year, according to the API. As prices for the motor fuel rose by 24 cents during the month, drawing near the psychologically jarring \$4.00-a-gallon level, drivers started cutting back fuel expenditures en masse, API chief economist John Felmy said.

### [Pumped Up: Are Americans Addicted To Oil?](#)

As many Americans struggle with higher gas prices, others look for ways to live using fewer fossil fuels. They pursue a personal form of energy independence — and they are finding that it's no easy feat.

### [All aboard! Amtrak sees surge in ridership](#)

With gas prices hovering around \$4 a gallon and this summer shaping up to be the most expensive ever for air travel, some vacationers may be turning to another method of transportation: train travel.

Amtrak has seen 18 consecutive months of ridership growth and is on track to set a new annual record. The passenger rail company reported 2.7 million passengers last month, a 9.9 percent increase over April 2010.

### [BP recovers \\$1 bn Gulf spill costs from Japan's Mitsui](#)

LONDON (AFP) – BP said on Friday that it had recovered more than \$1.0 billion in costs linked to last year's devastating Gulf of Mexico oil spill from a US subsidiary of Japanese trading house Mitsui & Co.

The announcement was welcome news for the British energy giant at the end of a week in which BP saw its hopes of exploiting Russian Arctic oil shattered.



### [Syria defies Obama call as crackdown continues](#)

AMMAN — Syrian security forces opened fire on protests around the country Friday in the latest sign the conflict could be moving toward a long and bloody stalemate as President Bashar Assad shrugs off tighter sanctions and U.S. calls to step aside.

Thousands of people demonstrated across Syria on Friday, calling for freedom in defiance of a military crackdown that has killed hundreds, witnesses and activists said. Witnesses reported protests Friday in the central cities of Homs and Hama, as well as the Mediterranean ports of Baniyas and Latakia.

### [Iraqi foreign oil payments threatened](#)

BP has lifted its first cargo of Iraqi crude as payment in kind for boosting output at the country's biggest oilfield.

But by reaching that milestone, it may have triggered a popular backlash against foreign oil companies in Iraq.

### [Russia's oil tsar unbowed after BP breakdown](#)

(Reuters) - Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin, who this week saw the crowning achievement of his career as Russia's energy tsar thwarted by rival businessmen, shows no sign of conceding defeat.

### [Ahmadinejad oil moves 'illegal'](#)

Iran's constitutional watchdog has said President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's decision to appoint himself caretaker Oil Minister is illegal, according to local media reports.

### [Gazprom Agrees With China, Ups Europe Plan](#)

Gazprom and China have agreed on a price and aim to resolve outstanding issues and sign a supply contract by mid-year, deputy chief executive Alexander Medvedev told Reuters in an interview at a gas storage conference in Salzburg, Austria, on Thursday.

### [More Fryer Grease Reported Stolen in Lincoln](#)

A string of local fryer grease robberies had Lincoln Police on the lookout. They caught two suspects from Missouri just days ago, 36 year-old Jesse Moore and 34 year-old Christy Harris. 10-11's Catherine Crane shows us how Lincoln Police caught some greasy suspects and now more businesses are coming forward with what they're calling

a messy situation.

Grease is as good as gold to some people. It can be converted and sold as biodiesel or animal feed, and when the price of gasoline goes up, the theft of grease goes up.

### [Outcry over new coal-fired plant in Victoria](#)

The Environmental Protection Authority has approved a new billion-dollar coal-powered station, making synthetic gas. The authority says it's satisfied the 'demonstration project' in Victoria's Latrobe Valley could deliver a 30 per cent reduction in greenhouse gases compared to current brown coal plants. Environmental groups are already considering legal action.

### [Italian court cancels Enel clean coal conversion](#)

A plan by Italian utility Enel to convert one of its oil fired power plants into a clean coal plant have been rejected by the country's top administrative court.

The ruling by Italy's State Council – which cannot be appealed – means that Enel will have to either cancel the €2.5 billion project, or re-start the permitting process from the beginning.

### [Brazil: Government Vows Crackdown on Cattle Ranchers in the Amazon](#)

Brazilian government officials said Wednesday that they would crack down on cattle ranchers in the Amazon after new data showed that deforestation there had increased by 26 percent in the nine months that ended in April, compared to with the same period a year before. The data showed to that about 710 square miles had been deforested in that time.

### [Amsterdam to convert vibrations from bridges into electricity](#)

In contrast to Masdar City's build-it-and-they-will-come approach, Amsterdam is retrofitting buildings from the 16th-century with hi-tech carbon emissions monitors and machines to turn the vibrations of cars into electricity.

### [Pressure to Improve Water Quality in Chicago River](#)

In recent days, the federal government and environmental groups have increased the pressure on Chicago's wastewater treatment agency to stop discharging untreated sewage into the Chicago River during storms and to disinfect the treated sewage that makes up 70 percent of the river's flow.



### [Hauling Icebergs to Slake the Earth's Thirst](#)

It's a seemingly outlandish idea that's been around for decades and has never been successfully realized. But a small group of scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs believe it can be done economically and are doggedly pursuing government and private sector support for a test effort in the North Atlantic.

Their plan is to use tugboats to haul a large iceberg off Newfoundland to the arid Canary Islands, near the Moroccan coast.

### [Software can point to climate tech](#)

A team of U.S. researchers has developed a model to identify technologies that are on the fast track to constant improvement. When applied to energy, it could help investors and policymakers sort out which ones will help us avoid catastrophic climate change.

### [Climate Change Blamed for Record Mississippi Floods](#)

WASHINGTON, DC (ENS) - Human-induced climate change is contributing to the recent heavy rain and ongoing record flooding along the Mississippi River, and we can expect more extreme weather events in the future, according to scientists and adaptation experts on a teleconference held by the Union of Concerned Scientists.

"Climate change is about more than warming. What we're really seeing is global weirding," said climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe, associate professor at Texas Tech University. "It is altering the character and conditions of the places we know and love. For many places around the world, what we are likely to see could be feast or famine - more frequency of weather at the extremes, from intense storms to prolonged droughts."

### [A New Gauge to See What's Beyond Happiness](#)

As the investigation of happiness proceeded, Dr. Seligman began seeing certain limitations of the concept. Why did couples go on having children even though the data clearly showed that parents are less happy than childless couples? Why did billionaires desperately seek more money even when there was nothing they wanted to do with it?

### [The Peak Oil Crisis: The Summer Ahead](#)

Despite the recent drop in oil prices, the outlook for the remainder of the year is not good. If the IEA numbers are correct the world is probably burning more oil each day than is coming out of the ground, with the difference being made up from the 2.6 billion barrel stockpiles held by the OECD countries. Every day brings new stories of coal,

electric power and oil product shortages in some corner of the world. The climate too is not cooperating with significant crop failures imminent in many parts of the world and the water levels at numerous hydro dams, particularly in Asia, falling rapidly.

Behind much of oil's recent price drop is the concern among oil traders that economic growth was not going as well in the U.S. and China as had been hoped. In the case of the US this is probably not a bad concern as much of the so-called recovery that is supposed to be taking place is based on hype and selective interpretation of suspect economic statistics. In reality, there has been very little improvement in the US economy this year other than the lingering effects of 2009's \$800 billion stimulus package.

### [Oil Climbs in New York on Signs of Fuel Demand, Heads for Weekly Decline](#)

Oil rose in New York, trimming its weekly decline, on signs of growing fuel demand in the world's two biggest crude-consuming nations.

July delivery futures climbed as much as 1.2 percent, recovering from a 1.6 percent drop yesterday. U.S. jobless claims fell by more-than-forecast 29,000 in the week ended May 14, according to the Labor Department. China's diesel demand may climb as factories turn to the fuel this summer for power generation amid electricity rationing, Barclays Capital said.

### [Gas prices keep inflation high at 3.3%](#)

Higher prices at the gas pumps kept Canada's annual inflation rate at a near three-year high of 3.3 per cent in April, Statistics Canada reported Friday.

Gasoline prices jumped more than six per cent over the month and 26.4 per cent in the past year, the agency said.

### [Pain at the pump](#)

Many Australians are driving less or opting to give up their vehicles altogether because of the surge in fuel prices.

### [American anger at gas prices fueled by rising household energy costs](#)

Congress's failed bid Tuesday to rein in multibillion-dollar tax breaks for oil companies was merely a first shot across the bow, as Americans frustrated by rising energy costs press their lawmakers to target the industry, according to a new study.

The analysis by ClearView Energy Partners estimates that Americans are now spending 12 percent of their disposable income on gasoline, electricity and heating – up from 7.7 percent in 2002. With Americans' disposable income increasing since 2002, households

are paying more than double what they did in 2002 – \$4,410 a year in 2011, compared with \$2,180 a year per in 2002.

### [Higher gas prices pinch consumers](#)

The meteoric rise in gasoline prices may have peaked, at least for now. But many shell-shocked consumers expect the pain at the pump to be a chronic condition.

A new USA TODAY/Gallup Poll finds that 54% of Americans believe high gas prices are here to stay. "It's like this is the new normal," says Demon Nelson of Southfield, Mich., after paying \$4.15 a gallon to fill up his Chevrolet Impala.

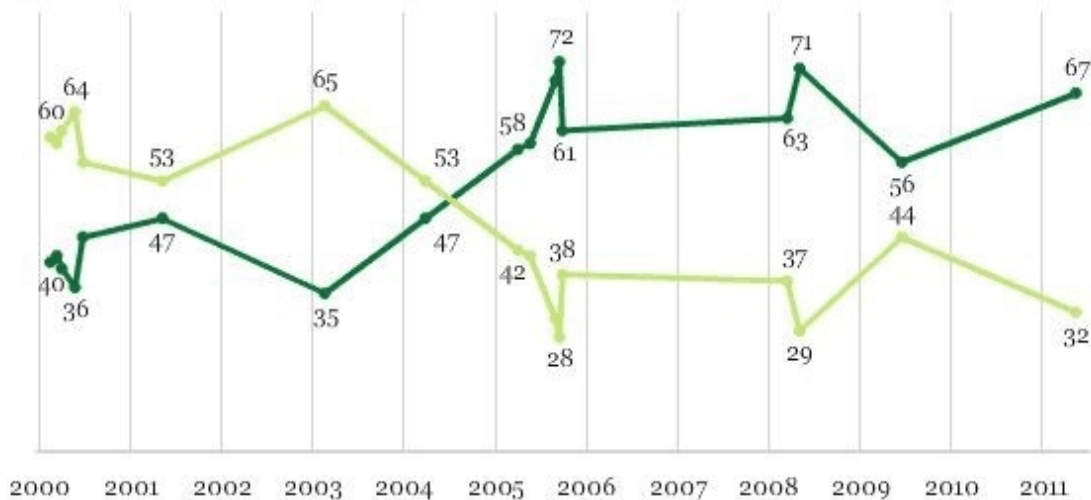
### [Good Graph Friday: Lifestyle changes due to higher gas](#)

#### *Impact of Recent Gas Price Increases on Personal Finances*

Have recent price increases in gasoline caused any financial hardship for you or your household?

■ % Yes, caused hardship

■ % No, have not



As gas prices rise, more than half of Americans say they have made changes to their lifestyle, according to a new Gallup poll.

The most common adjustment: driving less.

### [Gas prices could plummet for summer driving](#)

Gasoline prices could dive as the summer driving season begins.

Gas futures are heading for the biggest monthly drop in a year as demand shrinks, refiners bring spare capacity back on line after maintenance and plants in Louisiana avoid damage from Mississippi River floods, Bloomberg reports.

### [Once again speculation appears to be gouging gas consumers](#)

It appeared obvious months ago when "experts" predicted \$5 a gallon gas prices, that speculation was again manipulating the prices consumers pay at the pump. Now that all the speculator rhetoric has proved fallacious, it's all too clear.

### [Senate blocks move to open up offshore drilling](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – The Senate blocked a move by Republicans to speed domestic offshore oil and natural gas drilling on Wednesday, a fresh sign of congressional gridlock on energy issues even as drivers endure gasoline prices near \$4 a gallon.

### [Congress's Plans to Lower Gas Prices Won't Do Squat](#)

Gas prices are going to keep going up. Even if we opened up *all* of America's coastlines to offshore drilling, even by 2030 we'd only theoretically succeed at lowering gas prices by mere pennies. And that's according to the conservative-leaning Energy Information Administration. And for that matter, subsidies have little bearing on gas prices either.

### [Regulation is the key to lower gasoline prices](#)

The pundits say the high price of gasoline may cost Obama the election. The Republicans are saying that Obama is causing the problem by not allowing more drilling. They imply that is there is a lot more oil that can be found on public lands and in the Gulf and the increased production would lower gas prices.

Both of these assumptions are wrong. Anyone who will bother to check with the experts, and I don't mean Sen. Orrin Hatch, will soon discover that we have already reached peak oil in the U.S and there isn't much more good-quality, easily accessible oil out there. If there were, what are we doing drilling miles down in the ocean? And oil shale production seems to be a long way down the road.

### [Reasons to be cheerful, Part I](#)

There are plenty of reasons to be gloomy about the prospects of stabilising the global climate. The failure at Copenhagen (partly, but far from wholly, redressed in the subsequent meeting at Cancun) means that a binding international agreement, let alone an effective international trading scheme, is a long way off. The political right, at least in English-speaking countries, has deepened its commitment to anti-science delusionism. And (regardless of views on its merits) the prospect of a significant contribution from nuclear power has pretty much disappeared, at least for the next decade or so, following Fukushima and the failure of the US 'nuclear renaissance'.

But there's also some striking good news. Most important is the arrival of 'peak gasoline' in the US. US gasoline consumption peaked in 2006 and was about 8 per cent below the peak in 2010. Consumption per person has fallen more than 10 per cent.

### [China's April crude oil stocks rise 2.3% month-on-month](#)

BEIJING (Xinhua) -- China's April crude oil inventory rose 2.3 percent from March, but stocks of refined petroleum products dipped 2.9 percent month-on-month, according to data released by Xinhua's financial information branch, Xinhua 08, on Friday.

Of the refined oil products inventory, gasoline stocks fell 2 percent, diesel dropped 3.4 percent and kerosene declined 4 percent month-on-month.

### [Heat is on, and the mood has changed](#)

The plea for more oil supplies comes as Opec prepares for what could be its most contentious meeting in several years.

The International Energy Agency's (IEA) rare public statement said it was acting in a "constructive spirit" to work with oil producers and consumers other than its members. But the tone and content of the message signalled a shift from the co-operative atmosphere that prevailed just three months ago.

### [ANALYSIS-India must outbid Japan, China for new LNG supply](#)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - India's liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports will soar in the next decade to fuel its expanding economy, pitting the Asian giant against China and Japan for supplies as its domestic gas output struggles and overland delivery remains a pipe dream. India's trillion-dollar economy is already the world's eighth-largest importer of LNG, and those imports could rise as much as five-fold in the next decade.

India will have to hurry to secure the product it needs in the face of competition from Asian rivals China and nuclear-nervous Japan.

### [Shell boosts Australia gas with offshore LNG](#)

PERTH (Reuters) - Royal Dutch Shell is to anchor the world's biggest ever ship off the coast of Australia to produce liquefied natural gas for the booming Asian market in a landmark project expected to cost over \$10 billion (6 billion pounds).

### [Indonesia May Use Giant Floating Dock From Japan to Boost Coal Shipments](#)

Indonesia, the world's second-largest coal exporter, may build a floating dock worth as much as 100 billion yen (\$1.2 billion) with Japan to enable speedier transfer of the fuel from barges to bigger ships.

### [Poland to get 30 pct less Urals blend in May -trade](#)

(Reuters) - Polish refineries will receive one-third less Urals blend crude URL-E oil from Russia and Kazakhstan in May compared to April, trade sources told Reuters on Friday.

### [Russia to cut peak oil taxes in next 3 yrs - consultant](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - Russia will significantly ease its tax take in oil in the next three years as the current tax regime, one of the world's most stringent, makes development of many fields unattractive, a consultancy said on Wednesday.

Exclusive Analysis think tank said in a report it expected the world's top oil producer to cut its government tax take in oil by over five percentage points from the 85 percent in the next three years.

### [Alberta Wildfires Wane as Winds Ease, Lessening Risks to Oil Production](#)

Firefighters may begin to gain the upper hand over Alberta's wildfires as winds ease and humidity rises, lessening the risk to crude production sites, said a spokesman from Alberta Sustainable Resource Development.

### [NATO Aircraft Hit Pro-Qaddafi Libyan Warships](#)

NATO aircraft hit eight of Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi's warships in the ports of Tripoli, Al Khums and Sirte overnight as U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said members of Qaddafi's family fled the country.

"Given the escalating use of naval assets, NATO had no choice but to take decisive action to protect the civilian population of Libya and NATO forces at sea," Rear-Admiral Russell Harding said in a statement released today in Naples. "All the vessels targeted last night were naval warships with no civilian utility."

### [Obama says Kadhafi will go or be forced out](#)

TRIPOLI (AFP) – Libya's Moamer Kadhafi will "inevitably" leave or be forced from power, US President Barack Obama said on Thursday, as NATO declared it had significantly degraded the strongman's war machine.

UN chief Ban Ki-moon told AFP, meanwhile, that attempts to secure a ceasefire in Libya



have failed and the humanitarian crisis is worsening.

### [No sign of Libya's Ghanem despite air ticket: Austria](#)

VIENNA (Reuters) - Austrian officials said on Friday they had no reason to believe Libyan Oil Minister Shokri Ghanem had entered the country even though his name was on a passenger list for a flight that arrived on Thursday.

### [A Long Way From Reaching Our Peak](#)

Inspired, among others, by the typically apocalyptic, ecological maunderings of Jeremy Grantham (the renowned investor here providing us with classic evidence of the general non-transferability of specific expertise from one metier to another), the recent overwrought oil market has brought the Exhaustionists out in full force, each plaintively wailing of the dangers of Peak Oil (as well as Peak Copper, Peak Corn, etc.—though never, thankfully, Peek Freans).

### [Einhorn, Pickens and Puplava: Q1 2011 Portfolio Tracking](#)

Boone Pickens is a famed energy investor and, as I am a firm believer in peak oil, I peruse Pickens' BP Capital filings for new energy ideas. Pickens does not employ a strict value approach in buying stocks, but that does not preclude a possible opportunity showing up in his 13F-HR filing.

### [Japan utility head resigns amid nuclear crisis](#)

TOKYO (AP) — The president of the utility behind the world's worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl said Friday he was stepping down in disgrace after reporting the biggest losses in company history.

Tokyo Electric Power Co. President Masataka Shimizu apologized at his company's Tokyo headquarters and said he was taking responsibility for the nuclear crisis.

### [Japan PM: must review oversight of nuclear power](#)

TOKYO (Reuters) – Prime Minister Naoto Kan said on Wednesday Japan must rethink how nuclear power is regulated and explore other energy sources after a crisis at a tsunami-crippled plant, but sidestepped the question of how big a role atomic energy would play in the country's future.

Kan, battling low support rates, a feisty opposition and rebels in his own party, has pledged a blank-slate review of Japan's current energy policy that aims to boost nuclear power to more than 50 percent of electricity supply by 2020 from about 30 percent

now. But whether he can break the grip of the politically powerful utilities remains in doubt.

### [U.S. Was Warned on Vents Before Failure at Japan's Plant](#)

WASHINGTON — Five years before the crucial emergency vents at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant were disabled by an accident they were supposed to help handle, engineers at a reactor in Minnesota warned American regulators about that very problem.

### [The Importance of Venting, When a Reactor Threatens to Blow Its Stack](#)

When the reactors were designed in the 1960s, the idea was that in the event of an accident, all of the radioactive materials would be bottled up in the primary containment. This was itself a philosophical reversal, in the sense that it was an acknowledgment that it might be impossible to hold everything in.

### [Tokyo travel industry on the brink](#)

(CNNGo) -- In the cavernous lobby of the Tokyu Hotel in Tokyo, executives sip \$14 coffees, crisply dressed waiters hover with English-language menus and bilingual reception clerks wait patiently for incoming guests.

All that's missing are the foreigners in this five-star Shibuya landmark that normally hosts tens of thousands of overseas visitors every year.

A lone American couple says they nearly cancelled their trip.

### [Ministry urged to abandon Flamborough highway](#)

Citizens Opposed to Paving the Escarpment (COPE) told ministry officials at a public meeting Thursday night it believes the population prediction at the centre of the need for a new roadway — that about 450,000 more people will live in the Hamilton area by 2031 — needs to be revised because it is inflated. COPE co-chair Sue McMaster also disputed the contention that a highway creates jobs, and she said rail was not adequately reviewed, that agricultural land would be lost and that climate change and peak oil were not considered.

### [How is the transition to electric cars going?](#)

As electric cars arrive in American garages, drivers are going to have to start thinking of them more like cellphones and less like hungry children.

Just as we've learned to plug our phones in at night if we want to use them in the morning, we'll need to remember to plug in the car if we want to get to work. This will replace the old thinking in which, as the gas gauge approached empty, we lived in confidence that we could duck into a nearby gas station to top off the tank, just as we know we can find a grocery store or fast-food place if the kids get hungry. The infrastructure for recharging electric cars isn't that developed yet.

### [Hybrid Owners Look to Extend Carpool Privilege](#)

SAN FRANCISCO — Virtue may be its own reward, but incentives don't hurt. In California in 2004, when the country's first measure restricting vehicles' greenhouse gas emissions became law, 75,000 owners of the gas-stingiest hybrid cars were assured access to carpool lanes.

Now the \$8 yellow decal that served as a get-out-of-traffic-free card is about to become meaningless: the privilege, originally set to expire in 2008, was legislatively extended twice, and now ends July 1.

But the Toyota Prius and Honda Civic drivers who got the coveted decals — 10,000 more were added a couple of years later — are finding it hard to accept the idea that they are not as special as they once were.

### [GM to boost Volt production](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- General Motors is preparing to greatly increase production of the Chevrolet Volt as it prepares to begin selling the Detroit-made plug-in hybrid across the United States as well as in China and Europe.

### [What car-drivers value in 'going electric'](#)

Electric cars may be the best solution for weaning ourselves off of the gas-guzzling - and greenhouse gas-emitting - combustion engine. But for those selling electric vehicles, there is a lack of understanding over what customers want from, and what they will pay for, when it comes to plug-in automobiles.

Two studies from the University of Delaware (UD), have helped plug that gap, by looking at how consumers valued the features of electric vehicles - and how driving patterns would mesh with the limited range of the first generation of these cars.

### [Are electric cars the future of the automotive industry?](#)

They are the future. The internal combustion engine is such old, inefficient technology, and will always pollute. Something like 90% of car journeys are below 50 miles, and electric cars can have a range up to 300 miles. Batteries for electric vehicles are an

underdeveloped technology. It's all suppressed by government politics, greedy oil and automotive companies. They're not going to make as much money when we all have electric cars.

### [E-cars won't solve congestion, says president of Bicycle Association](#)

Philip Taylor tells Bicycle Association AGM that global urbanisation means cars are on the wane, bikes big part of the future

In a speech at yesterday's AGM of the Bicycle Association, outgoing president Philip Taylor argued that, over the long term, global urbanisation means car mileage will continue its decline, and bicycle mileage will increase as cities face increasing space, cost and health pressures.

### [Bike to Work Day TODAY](#)

If you weren't aware, today is National Bike to Work Day in the U.S. That means, even if today is the only day of the year you do so, you should bike to work today!

### [Wind power affects US electricity prices "less than one per cent"](#)

US utilities have rubbished claims that adding renewable energy generation to their portfolios will cause domestic energy bills to "skyrocket", revealing that a series of studies have shown that in most cases renewable energy projects result in price increases of just a fraction of a per cent.

### [When the oil runs out...](#)

The most pessimistic analysts say peak oil production from all possible sources will be in 2015 and will reach 90 million barrels per day (bpd).

Scientists predict the level of 90m bpd will last 30 years, so that major changes will come soon after 2030.

And they are serious, for the 90 per cent of total world transport depends on oil.

### [Invest in This Clean Energy Before Prices Double](#)

Two popular "green" alternatives to oil and coal are wind and solar energy production. The problem with these options is that they are currently inefficient and ineffective. Wind, even in windy places, only blows enough to create electricity with wind turbines about 30% of the time. Solar energy production requires the sun, which doesn't shine 24 hours a day. Eliminate massive government subsidies and these two alternative energy

industries would die on the vine. They are both expensive and impractical, and it is easy to imagine the federal government, with its huge deficits and budget problems, eliminating these taxpayer-funded subsidy programs.

The most likely solution to the world's energy problems is the most controversial — nuclear.

### [Interview With David W. Orr](#)

**TreeHugger:** You've said that most environmental problems result from poor design ("factories that produce more waste than product; buildings that squander energy; farms that bleed soil; cities designed to sprawl, etc"). Do you believe that we can get to good, ecological design just by changing incentives - like making pollutants more expensive than clean alternatives - or is it an educational challenge. Is it mostly about teaching what good design is to the people who create product, services, cities, etc?

**David W. Orr:** Incentives to design for whole systems that work over the long term would help a great deal. These can take a variety of forms and can be introduced at different scales in different ways. Improved building codes mostly administered at state and local levels, for example, would be useful to raise the bar in construction and renovation. At the Federal level, steady increases in energy taxes would be useful for internalizing the full costs of energy extraction and emissions and would correct the major flaw in markets for virtually everything. Higher resulting prices, presumably, would result in greater efficiency and reduce unnecessary consumption. But people will have to understand what's at risk before they will agree to pay higher energy taxes. And they will have to see themselves as responsible agents in a larger civic commons. The latter two are clearly educational and political challenges.

### [River rises; Northwest wind farms, plants cut back](#)

PORTLAND, Ore. – For five hours early Wednesday the Pacific Northwest was running green, almost all of its electricity coming from hydroelectric dams in a river system flush with spring runoff.

That's a tiny carbon footprint. But it could also be a blow to the region's burgeoning wind industry, and could kill endangered fish in their spring migration.

### [Preparedness 101: Zombie Apocalypse](#) (from the CDC - yes, really)

So what do you need to do before zombies...or hurricanes or pandemics for example, actually happen? First of all, you should have an emergency kit in your house. This includes things like water, food, and other supplies to get you through the first couple of days before you can locate a zombie-free refugee camp (or in the event of a natural disaster, it will buy you some time until you are able to make your way to an evacuation shelter or utility lines are restored). Below are a few items you should include in your kit, for a full list visit the CDC Emergency page.

## [Forget the Rapture: May 21 Is National Apocalypse Day — A Celebration of Peak Humanity](#)

And that's why we should all make sure to make tomorrow National Apocalypse Day: because by celebrating the American right to say that the end of the world is coming, we are also celebrating the American right to say that the end of the world is coming for everybody but *us*, and that the Americans whose lifestyles we don't like had better change them or else they're going to be cast into seas boiling with blood. Peak Humanity turns out to serve the same purpose as Peak Oil, which serves the same purpose as Global Warming, which serves the same purpose as the Book of Revelations: it provides the same opportunity to ask sinners to repent, and the same opportunity for disappointment when they don't, and the world goes on anyway. Of course, the difference between my apocalyptic scenario and *your* apocalyptic scenario is that mine is perfectly reasonable; it is self-evident that what will doom humanity is a peak population of 10.2 billion humans, which is why tomorrow, when the Rapture comes and a billion or so believers are taken up into the arms of Jesus, I will finally breathe a sigh of relief.

## [Global population is set to peak – here's how to profit](#)

Writing in 1798, Malthus argued that the population would grow too fast to keep up with the food supply. Disaster would ensue. (That's the short version, but you catch my drift).

Today, many people – most eye-catchingly, US investor Jeremy Grantham at GMO – are making the same argument: Malthus wasn't wrong; he was early. And now, once again, we're at risk of running out of everything, from energy to food to basic materials.

Given our bearish tendencies here at MoneyWeek, you might expect us to lap this up. But truth be told, I'm an optimist in the long run.

## [An introduction to our guest editor](#)

*BusinessGreen's* inaugural guest editor is by no means afraid of stirring things up. A staunch proponent of solar photovoltaics in the UK, Jeremy Leggett has remained one of the UK's most vocal environmentalists with his outspoken views on peak oil and contention that the world should abandon fossil fuels as soon as possible.

## [How to develop a business plan for oil depletion](#)

Chris Skrebowski explores how businesses can best protect themselves against the threat posed by Peak Oil.

## [What does \\$100 crude and \\$4 gas mean for water?](#)



I have been at the Ontario Water Summit this week. It was well attended, and will certainly help make the connection between the province and water technology, but I found myself talking a lot more about gas than water at the event. It seems that excitement about shale gas is straying towards heresy. People are beginning to say that there is so much gas around, that there may be no immediate need to pursue renewable energy so hard.

The argument goes that the world is facing two separate energy crises: one related to global warming and the other related to peak oil. Both of these problems can be addressed by expanding the supply of natural gas. Switching from coal to gas will reduce greenhouse gas emissions per kilowatt hour of electricity production, and this will hold down greenhouse gas emission until renewables are sufficiently competitive to take over.

### [Australia: Growcom calls for federal government to join the dots in food security and health debate](#)

Peak horticulture body Growcom today called for the urgent integration of food policy and programs by the federal government to plan for future food security.

Chief Executive Officer Alex Livingstone said the call follows the release of several federal government reports in recent days which indicate an insular and complacent approach to national food security and which missed the big picture.

### [Solutions to Water Supply Woes Surface in the West](#)

The good news is that for all the negative talk — whether it's the strained relations between urban areas and agriculture or the indiscriminate placement of boggy golf courses in semi-deserts — there are signs that a paradigm shift is occurring.

One example is the growing interest in alternatives such as reclaimed water. "We used to think of waste water as a liability," Gleick says; "now, it's considered an asset." For example, in Tucson, 700 single-family homes, 39 parks and 52 schools, including the University of Arizona, irrigate with reclaimed water.

### [Rising seas data 'not scare campaign'](#)

Climate Change Minister Greg Combet says the Federal Government is not trying to scare people by releasing data about the risks of rising sea levels in metropolitan Adelaide.

### [Oil: the real reason we need a carbon price](#)

There could be another reason why we don't need to bother about weaning people off

fossil fuels. Peak Oil, and the subsequent decline in world oil production, will do it for us. Not only the supply of oil, but also of natural gas and coal, will all peak before mid century, according to a range of independent projections.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).