



## Drumbeat: September 26, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on September 26, 2011 - 9:26am

### [Upside of economic worries: Lower gas prices](#)

NEW YORK — Soaring gasoline prices are in the rearview mirror.

For the first time in months, retail gasoline prices have fallen below \$3 a gallon in places, including parts of Michigan, Missouri and Texas. And the relief is likely to spread thanks to a sharp decline in crude-oil prices.

### [Crude Oil Rises From Seven-Week Low on Hopes for European Rescue Measures](#)

Oil rose from its lowest in almost seven weeks in New York on speculation that renewed measures by the European Central Bank may alleviate the region's sovereign debt crisis, supporting economic growth and fuel demand.

Futures reversed losses of as much as 3.4 percent after a euro-region central bank official, who declined to be identified, said policy makers are likely to debate the resumption of covered-bond purchases next week. Saudi Arabia, the world's largest crude exporter, may cut production to prevent prices falling below \$90 a barrel in London, according to HSBC Holdings Plc.

### [Russian economy can survive low oil prices - Kudrin](#)

The Russian economy will be able to function normally for a year, if global oil prices fall to \$60 per barrel, Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin said on Monday in an interview with Russia Today international news TV channel.

"We expect this fall will certainly cause a decrease in our economic growth down to nearly zero or below zero, but in terms of the budget policy we'll be able to cope with this for up to a year," Kudrin said.

### [Gazprom says no gas deal with Ukraine yet](#)

(Reuters) - Gazprom will continue gas talks with Ukraine later this week after Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich failed to secure agreement at the weekend with his

Russian counterpart, the head of Russia's gas company said on Monday.

### [Shell shuts in 25,000 bpd oil output in Nigeria](#)

(Reuters) - Royal Dutch Shell shut in 25,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil production from its Nigerian Imo River field in the Niger Delta from August 28, the company said on Monday.

### [Saudi Monarch Grants Women Right to Vote](#)

King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia on Sunday granted women the right to vote and run in future municipal elections, the biggest change in a decade for women in a puritanical kingdom that practices strict separation of the sexes, including banning women from driving.

Saudi women, who are legally subject to male chaperones for almost any public activity, hailed the royal decree as an important, if limited, step toward making them equal to their male counterparts. They said the uprisings sweeping the Arab world for the past nine months — along with sustained domestic pressure for women's rights and a more representative form of government — prompted the change.

### [Libya resumes oil production](#)

Libya has resumed oil production for the first time since the civil war, tapping 15 wells and producing 31,900 barrels per day.

Italian energy giant Eni said work had resumed at the Abu-Attifel fields, about 180 miles south of Benghazi. Other wells would be reactivated soon to reach the "required volumes to fill the pipeline" between the Abu-Attifel field and the Zuetina port.

### [Former Rebels' Rivalries Hold Up Governing in Libya](#)

As the former rebels in Libya try to assemble a government to replace the toppled Qaddafi government, the quiet hoarding of weapons and detainees illustrates the fissures of regional rivalry and mutual distrust that continue to impede progress.

### [Iran nuke effort hit by sabotage](#)

WASHINGTON: Iran's star-crossed nuclear and energy programs have suffered a rash of setbacks, mishaps and catastrophes in the past two years. Assassins killed three scientists with links to Iran's nuclear programs. The Stuxnet computer worm that famously infected computers worldwide zeroed in on a single target in Iran, devices that can make weapons-usable uranium. Dozens of unexplained explosions hit the country's

gas pipelines, and Iran's first nuclear power plant suffered major equipment failures as technicians struggle to bring it online.

### [Iraq urged to reform financial system](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Iraq's banking system is hurting the country's growth prospects and must be revamped in order to entice foreign investment and diversify the oil-producing economy, international lending bodies said on Saturday.

### [India, Vietnam to seek oil in West Philippine Sea](#)

NEW DELHI - Shrugging off Chinese warnings, India's state-run oil firm ONGC said on Friday it would press ahead with long-term partner Vietnam in exploring the disputed South China Sea for oil.

The plans have stoked concerns that the exploration could exacerbate tensions between fast-growing neighbors China and India, who fought a brief, bloody war in 1962 over their disputed Himalayan border.

### [BP Gulf of Mexico Drilling Plan Criticized by Environmentalists, Lawmakers](#)

BP Plc's plan to resume full drilling operations in the Gulf of Mexico after the worst U.S. oil spill was criticized by environmental groups and lawmakers.

"We don't think there is any way they can drill safely," Jackie Savitz, a senior campaign director at Washington-based Oceana, said in an interview. "If we see an opportunity to stop drilling through litigation, we will seriously consider it."

### [Developments show demise of oil greatly exaggerated](#)

Turns out, though, that the demise of oil was greatly exaggerated, even in a state where oil production peaked years ago. Someone forgot to tell energy firms that oil was no longer noteworthy — or profitable.

### [An Energy Renaissance](#)

At the same time that the US has increased production it has reduced demand. Peak oil demand in the US was reached in 2005. "We will not see that peak reached again," said Burkhard, who further explained, "The great recession had a negative impact on oil consumption, but it is not connected to the fall in demand." That has been brought about by higher fuel economy standards and carbon regulations that were imposed under President Bush in 2007.

“[President] Obama has increased the standards even more with a doubling of fuel economy standards over the next ten to 15 years.”

“The decline in demand is a global trend,” said Burkhard.

### [Peak Oil: Laherrère responds to Yergin](#)

It is at present quite fashionable to talk of the “digital oil field” to impress investors. But to this day I have not come across any mature field that has significantly increased its reserves by the use of this technology. To pretend to be able to grow reserves by 125 Gb thanks to this technology amounts to nothing more than wishful thinking, and does not stand up to any serious study.

### [The Third Industrial Revolution: Toward A New Economic Paradigm \(EXCERPT\)](#)

Our industrial civilization is at a crossroads. Oil and the other fossil fuel energies that make up the industrial way of life are sunsetting, and the technologies made from and propelled by these energies are antiquated. The entire industrial infrastructure built off of fossil fuels is aging and in disrepair. The result is that unemployment is rising to dangerous levels all over the world. Governments, businesses and consumers are awash in debt and living standards are plummeting everywhere. A record one billion human beings--nearly one seventh of the human race--face hunger and starvation.

### [Ford May Make Electric Cars in China: Mulally](#)

Ford Motor Co. may make electric cars with its partner in China as the auto industry moves toward producing more fuel-efficient vehicles, Chief Executive Officer Alan Mulally said.

“As we move to more electrification, you’re going to see more hybrids, plug-in hybrids and all-electric” cars, Mulally, 66, said in a Bloomberg Television interview on Sept. 24 in Chongqing, China.

### [Dubai plans big solar plant: DEWA CEO](#)

DUBAI: Dubai is poised to unveil a big solar power plant as part of a push to get five percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030, Saeed Mohammed Al-Tayer, vice chairman of Dubai’s Supreme Council of Energy, said.

### [Protect coal, wood options: Proposition 2 discourages potential good alternatives](#)

Indeed, pollution in Fairbanks might be the worst of any significant metropolitan area in the United States, considering two of the few viable solutions to our extremely high

heating costs are wood and coal.

This puts Fairbanks at the front line of the world's energy crisis because, unlike almost everywhere else in America and even unlike the majority of the population of our own state, we heat with oil rather than cheap, clean natural gas.

### [Engineers can build a low-carbon world if we let them](#)

One word sums up the attitude of engineers towards climate change: frustration. Political inertia following the high-profile failure of 2009's Copenhagen climate conference has coupled with a chorus of criticism from a vocal minority of climate-change sceptics. Add the current economic challenges and the picture looks bleak. Our planet is warming and we are doing woefully little to prevent it getting worse.

Engineers know there is so much more that we could do. While the world's politicians have been locked in predominantly fruitless talks, engineers have been developing the technologies we need to bring down emissions and help create a more stable future.

### [Chinese target Arctic with Iceland land deal: experts](#)

A Chinese businessman's plans to buy a swathe of Iceland for a resort have sparked local scepticism, amid speculation it is a bid by Beijing to get its hands on Arctic riches.

The melting Arctic ice cap means lucrative oil and gas deposits under the seabed could soon become accessible, and shorter shipping routes between Asia and Europe will open up.

### [Groundwater greed driving sea level rises](#)

SLOWLY and almost imperceptibly the seas are rising, swollen by melting ice and the expansion of seawater as it warms. But there's another source of water adding to the rise: humanity's habit of pumping water from underground aquifers to the surface. Most of this water ends up in the sea.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](#).