



Drumbeat: November 16, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on November 16, 2011 - 9:11am

[Pump Up the Storage](#)

If we adopt solar and wind as major components of our energy infrastructure as we are weaned from fossil fuels, we have to solve the energy storage problem in a big way. An earlier post demonstrated that we do not likely possess enough materials in the world to simply build giant lead-acid (or nickel-based or lithium-based) batteries to do the job. Comments frequently pointed to pumped hydro storage as a far more sensible answer. Indeed, pumped storage is currently the dominant—and nearly only—grid-scale storage solution out there. Here, we will take a peek at pumped hydro and evaluate what it can do for us.

[Thousands of Kuwaitis 'storm parliament'](#)

KUWAIT CITY, Kuwait — Thousands of Kuwaitis stormed parliament on Wednesday after police and elite forces beat up protesters marching on the prime minister's home to demand he resign, an opposition MP said.

"Now, we have entered the house of the people," said Mussallam al-Barrak, who led the protest along with several other lawmakers and youth activists also calling for the dissolution of parliament over alleged corruption.

[Diesel shortage hits prairie truckers](#)

The amiable Winnipegger was sitting in the cab of his truck — near the end of a line of trucks waiting to refuel at east Regina's Husky Travel Centre.

He's one of the many people paying the price in time and worry, from a quadruple whammy of problems in refining the diesel fuel that runs the Prairies' heavy trucks.

Synyshyn said he's heard talk from truckers that there's no diesel between Regina and Calgary.

[More pain as another fuel shortage haunts Uganda](#)

Fuel prices are set to shoot through the roof as dealers report a shortage in supplies, the

dilemma of which presents a nagging set of problems.

With the expected hike in pump prices, Ugandans are to experience higher costs of living, while the shilling's recent gain against the dollar will almost count for nothing for those heading to fuel up their vehicles. For about two weeks, Uganda is expected to experience high fuel prices due to a sudden shortage in supplies, according to some dealers.

[S. Sudan oil firms face fuel cuts](#)

Oil companies operating in South Sudan's Unity state face shortage of fuel, an official said on Tuesday. Unity State Governor Taban Deng Gai said he now worries that the oil producing land-locked country could soon be unable to execute development programmes due to lack of fuel.

[Fewer Low-Income Oklahomans To Receive Winter Heating Assistance](#)

OKLAHOMA CITY - A program that has helped low-income Oklahomans with their winter heating bills in the past won't help as many in need this winter.

According to the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS), the federally funded Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has greatly reduced the dollar amount available this winter. OKDHS officials say because of the lower amount provided in the federal budget, the number of Oklahomans who traditionally receive benefits will be drastically reduced.

[Chile's energy experts weigh in on debate](#)

A commission of energy experts delivered their recommendations to President Sebastián Piñera Wednesday on what some call a looming energy crisis in Chile. The 200-page document called for a greater non-conventional renewable energy initiative and for more governmental involvement in all areas of energy.

[Exxon Preparing to Shut Antwerp Oil Refinery for Strike](#)

Exxon Mobil Corp. is preparing to halt units at its Antwerp oil refinery in Belgium on Nov. 18, Johan Scharpe, a company spokesman, said by telephone.

[Oil sands opponents "treacherous" -Canada minister](#)

(Reuters) - In a sign of the strain the Canadian government is feeling over development of the tar sands, Environment Minister Peter Kent said on Wednesday that opposition legislators who campaigned in Washington against the idea were treacherous.

[Route Proposals May Ease an Oil Pipeline Bottleneck](#)

OTTAWA — With the timing, and perhaps the future, of the Keystone XL pipeline project from Canada's oil sands to the Gulf Coast now uncertain, two alternatives to the hotly contested project have begun emerging.

Both would try to solve one of the problems that the Keystone project was meant to address: the shortage of pipeline capacity for carrying oil from a main terminal in Cushing, Okla., to refineries in Texas and other parts of the Gulf Coast.

[TransCanada pours cold water on rivals' plans to ship to Asia](#)

TransCanada has been "taking a pretty hard look" at ways to send Canadian crude to one of the country's coasts, where it could be loaded onto tankers and shipped to offshore markets, Alex Pourbaix, the company's president of energy and oil pipelines, said Wednesday.

But he suggested that problems encountered by Keystone XL, which drew heated opposition in the United States, pale in comparison with what awaits those looking to build new pipelines through British Columbia.

[PetroChina's Dalian terminal receives 1st LNG cargo](#)

(Reuters) - PetroChina's Dalian liquefied natural gas receiving terminal, its second and China's fifth, received its first cargo of the super-chilled gas on Wednesday, in line with an earlier report by Reuters.

[A Long, Long Road to Recycling Nuclear Fuel](#)

The question of what to do with spent nuclear fuel from civilian power reactors has stirred renewed interest in reprocessing — that is, chopping up the fuel, retrieving materials that can power a reactor and possibly recovering the most troublesome waste products so they can be broken up in the reactor into easier-to-handle elements.

[The Peak Oil Crisis: Transitioning to Cold Fusion](#)

Events move quickly these days. Two weeks ago we were watching Bologna, Italy where an entrepreneur and a retired physics professor claimed to have discovered the Holy Grail of energy - cold fusion or as it is now known: Low Energy Nuclear Reactions. At the time, there was (and still is) widespread concern that the various demonstrations of an energy-producing devices were a scam as the developers, for commercial reasons, refused to give outsiders access to their inner workings.

[Gas mileage boost means pricier cars - EPA](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- New federal gas mileage rules proposed Wednesday will add thousands of dollars to the cost of new cars. But in the long run, regulators say, drivers will spend less on gas, outweighing the additional cost at the dealership.

[A new challenge for electric cars -- fire](#)

Electric cars -- already on a steep climb because of price and distance anxiety -- will have a greater commercial challenge if consumers fear their car could catch fire. So that the news that a General Motors Volt burst into flames in a testing-center parking lot is going to raise alarm bells. In fact, the incident is not reason for distress-- the vehicle was undergoing crash tests, and as GM points out, any car is subject to fire should a crash be sufficiently severe. The important thing -- and the one that GM will have to figure out -- is that it caught fire three weeks *after* the latest test crash.

[Energy Secretary Chu defends Solyndra loan](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- Energy secretary Steven Chu is hitting back at criticism of a government loan program for renewable energy in the wake of the Solyndra scandal, saying the U.S. must "compete or accept defeat" in the clean tech race.

In remarks prepared for delivery before a Congressional committee on Thursday, Chu said the government should not waver in its support for clean energy despite potentially being on the hook for more than \$500 million after Solyndra's bankruptcy.

[The Solyndra question: Should the U.S. fail in order to succeed?](#)

Is government-led investment in clean-energy technologies a boondoggle and destined to fail? In China, Japan and South Korea, the answer is no. But according to a few long pieces over the weekend, the answer is the opposite when it comes to the United States. The authors ask in essence whether the Obama Administration is out of its mind in joining the global race for the development and marketing of solar panels (pictured above, solar panels in China), wind turbines, advanced batteries and electric-enhanced vehicles.

[Americans Waking Up to Light Bulb Changeover](#)

The first step in getting people to change the way they consume energy is making them aware that change is afoot. When it comes to lighting technologies, in particular, it seems that consumer awareness is growing.

For the first time, a majority of Americans now know that federal legislation will eliminate "most traditional incandescent lighting by 2014," according to a new survey

conducted by the lighting manufacturer Osram Sylvania.

[Behind Shift on Smog and Re-election Calculus](#)

WASHINGTON — The summons from the president came without warning the Thursday before Labor Day. As she was driven the four blocks to the White House, Lisa P. Jackson, the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, suspected that the news would not be good. What she did not see coming was a rare public rebuke the president was about to deliver by rejecting her proposal to tighten the national standard for smog.

[ECONOMY: Money and Energy](#)

Money and energy have always been linked. For example, a gold currency was essentially an energy currency because the amount of gold produced in a year was determined by the cost of the energy it took to extract it. If energy (perhaps in the form of slaves or horses rather than fossil fuel) was cheap and abundant, goldmining would prove profitable, and a lot of gold would go into circulation enabling more trading to be done. If the increased level of activity then drove the price of slaves or coal up, the flow of gold would decline, slowing the rate at which the economy grew. It was a neat, natural balancing mechanism which worked rather well. In fact, the only time it broke down seriously was when the Spanish conquistadors got gold for very little energy—by stealing it from the Aztecs and the Incas. That caused a massive inflation and damaged the Spanish economy for many years.

[Selling the Oil Illusion, American Style](#)

The US is currently enjoying its second stabilization phase since the peak in 1970. (Daily oil production has rebounded from a deep hole in 2008, from below 5 mbpd to above 5.5 mbpd). The first stabilization period lasted for more than 7 years, from 1977 to 1985. While it did not reverse the overall decline trend, which had resumed by 1990, this was certainly good news, just as our current production increases are good news. But the production history laid out graphically here is instructive and gives a clear warning: It would be unwise to herald the recent uptick in domestic production with a "new era" headline. Deepwater drilling, Gulf of Mexico, and Alaska were all "new era" events in their day as well. Or so they seemed.

Now, three respectable publications have recently cast the advent of new oil extraction in America as a kind of miracle. And indeed, technologically, the refinement of hydraulic fracturing techniques -- first used to extract natural gas, and now used to extract oil -- is miraculous. But a technique such as this, although replicable and repeatable, will not change the fact that newer, unconventional resources are developed and produce oil at a much slower rate. One year after the Black Giant of East Texas was discovered in the early 1930s, it was producing just 1 mbpd. The US no longer has resources such as this to exploit. The history of US oil production over the past 40 years should make this clear.

[Oil falls below \\$99 after surprise US supply rise](#)

SINGAPORE – Oil prices fell below \$99 a barrel Wednesday in Asia after a report showed U.S. crude supplies rose unexpectedly last week, suggesting demand may remain weak.

...The American Petroleum Institute said late Tuesday that crude inventories added 1.3 million barrels last week while analysts surveyed by Platts, the energy information arm of McGraw-Hill Cos., had predicted a drop of 1.5 million barrels.

Inventories of gasoline fell 2.9 million barrels last week while distillates dropped 2.6 million barrels, the API said.

[Gas Exporters Seek 'High' Prices as They Cooperate on Supply, Projects](#)

The world's largest natural-gas exporters aim to cooperate in developing projects for production and sale of the fuel to raise prices and boost supply.

Officials from Qatar, Iran, Egypt and Algeria, among others, agreed today in the Qatari capital Doha that the price of the fuel used to generate electricity is too low. They disagreed on how the Gas Exporting Countries Forum, a producers' group set up to share market information and coordinate projects, could also help maximize the income of its 11 members.

[Canadian Oil Sands Provides Syncrude Production Update](#)

Canadian Oil Sands Limited (COS.TO) last night announced that crude oil production from the Syncrude facility is now expected to total 105-107 million barrels for 2011.

[Indian Oil Slumps to Two-Year Low After Cutting Gasoline Prices](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Indian Oil Corp., the nation's biggest refiner, dropped to the lowest in more than two years in Mumbai trading after state refiners cut gasoline prices for the first time since January 2009.

[Russia says too early to speak about new gas price deal with Ukraine](#)

It is too early to speak about any new accords reached between Russia and Ukraine on gas price cuts for the ex-Soviet republic before Moscow and Kiev sign corresponding agreements, the Russian government's press secretary, Dmitry Peskov, said on Wednesday.

Earlier on Wednesday, a Ukrainian government source said Moscow and Kiev had

agreed on a new gas price and would sign an agreement in the next few days but declined to specify the agreed gas price for Ukraine.

[Petrobras workers postpone strike after new offer](#)

RIO DE JANEIRO (Reuters) - Brazil's main federation of oil workers postponed to next week a strike planned for Wednesday as workers evaluate a new offer by state-run Petrobras.

[UK Buzzard oilfield output reduced again-sources](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - Oil output at the Buzzard oilfield in the North Sea, the UK's largest, remains reduced, two trading sources said on Wednesday, lowering supply of the crude that normally sets the dated Brent benchmark.

[Keystone Pipeline Will Be Rerouted](#)

At a special session of the Nebraska Legislature, a state senator announced Monday that TransCanada had agreed to adjust its intended route of the Keystone XL oil pipeline to avoid the environmentally sensitive Sand Hills region of the state.

[The Keystone victory that wasn't](#)

Now that Barack Obama has kicked the Keystone project down the road, anti-pipeline activists are rejoicing. "This is what it means to change the conversation," said Naomi Klein. "This is an amazing victory for our movement," crowed Bill McKibben and his 350.org team.

In fact, the decision to re-review the pipeline route is an amazing victory for political expediency. By ensuring that nothing will happen until after the 2012 election, Mr. Obama buys himself a reprieve with the environmentalists. But nothing else will change. The U.S. will not consume a litre less of oil if Keystone is never built. It will simply buy the oil from somewhere else. Nor will this decision threaten the long-term future of the oil (oops, tar) sands. If the U.S. doesn't buy our oil, the Chinese will.

[BP Must Face Gulf Spill Claims From Alabama and Louisiana](#)

BP Plc (BP) must face claims under federal maritime law, though not under state law, in suits brought by Louisiana and Alabama over the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, a judge said.

The states can sue for negligence and products liability under general maritime law and are eligible for punitive damages, U.S. District Judge Carl Barbier said yesterday. He

dismissed claims brought under state environmental laws, including demands for civil penalties, finding they were preempted by federal law governing the Outer Continental Shelf.

[Shell, Mitsubishi Win Government Approval for \\$17 Billion Iraq Gas Project](#)

Iraq approved a \$17 billion contract with Royal Dutch Shell Plc (RDSA) and Mitsubishi Corp. (8058) for the capture of natural gas at three oilfields in the south of the country, a government spokesman said.

Iraq has a 51 percent stake in the venture known as South Gas Co., Ali Al-Dabbagh said today. Shell has a 44 percent stake, while Mitsubishi owns the rest, he said by telephone from Baghdad. The agreement is for 25 years, according to Al-Dabbagh.

[Nigeria: Solving Nigeria's Oil, Gas Sector Problems](#)

While a country like Namibia got "Biggest YoY winner" in the recent annual Africa Oil & Gas conference held in Cape Town, Nigeria, the self glorified giant of Africa clinched "Biggest YoY loser" award.

The development has once again raised the question as to whether the present government can really achieve its goal of becoming one of the 20 most powerful economies in the world in the next few years, as encapsulated in the various programmes touted by the President Goodluck Jonathan led administration.

[Nationalism Replaces Crisis as Biggest Threat to Metal Supply](#)

Rising government demands for higher taxes and royalties are becoming a bigger threat to mining companies and their production than the financial crisis that's wiped \$6 trillion off stock market values since July.

[Oil and China](#)

Even though China is no longer self sufficient with respect to oil, and its dependency on the global oil industry will only increase in the years ahead, Dan believes that China's leaders are less paranoid about this dependency than they were in the days of Mao. According to Dan, China now realizes that it can buy the energy it needs. He quotes an energy strategist in Beijing who said: "There's no other solution but to rely on the marketplace. What's different about exporting to America and importing energy from elsewhere? China is part of world markets."

[Syria defectors 'attack military base in Harasta'](#)

Syrian army defectors have attacked a major military base near Damascus, Syrian opposition groups say.

Parts of the notorious Air Force Intelligence building in Harasta were reported to have been destroyed, but there were no reports of casualties.

[Tensions rise on South China Sea dispute](#)

TENSIONS over the oil-rich and strategically important South China Sea escalated yesterday, as Chinese state media accused the US and the Philippines of planning a "grab" for its resources and a senior foreign ministry official said it did not want the issue discussed at this week's East Asia Summit in Bali.

[Clinton warns against intimidation in South China Sea dispute](#)

(Reuters) - U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Wednesday urged claimants to the South China Sea not to resort to intimidation to push their cause in the potentially oil-rich waters, an indirect reference to China ahead of a regional leaders' summit.

Clinton reiterated that the United States wanted a candid discussion of the maritime dispute, which an Australian think tank warned earlier this year could lead to war, when the leaders gather in Bali, Indonesia, this week.

[Saudi prince warns against any attack on Iran](#)

(Reuters) - A military attack on Iran aimed at halting its nuclear program could have catastrophic consequences and only strengthen Tehran's determination to make an atomic weapon, the former head of Saudi Arabia's intelligence services said on Tuesday.

"Such an act I think would be foolish and to undertake it I think would be tragic," Prince Turki al-Faisal said at a Washington, D.C., appearance.

[Turkey: no plans for nuclear cooperation with Iran](#)

ANKARA (Reuters) - Turkey has no plans for cooperation with Iran to build nuclear power plants, Energy Minister Taner Yildiz said on Wednesday, a day after a senior Iranian official had floated the possibility.

[Russia Recalls France's Revolutionary Slide](#)

Importantly, however, Russia's relative prosperity makes the country even more like France of the late 1700s, about which de Tocqueville wrote that "steadily increasing

prosperity, far from tranquilizing the population, everywhere promoted a spirit of unrest.” Unlike in eighteenth-century France, however, Russia’s economic growth and government budget is uniquely dependent on energy revenues and therefore vulnerable to external shocks. Mr. Putin acknowledged this and argued that the government had been trimming spending, which now requires an oil price of \$108 per barrel to balance Russia’s federal budget. Further, he said, the country’s reserves would allow the government to manage prices as low as \$93 per barrel.

Yet Russia’s prime minister seemed unconcerned at the observation by the Brookings Institution’s respected economist Clifford Gaddy that separately from the oil shock of the 1970s and early 1980s, oil prices during the last decade have been radically higher than real prices since 1880, with today’s oil prices roughly four times higher than the historical average. A return to prices consistent with these historical levels could be devastating for Russia’s economy; the fall in prices after the earlier shock arguably contributed more than any other single factor to the Soviet Union’s collapse. Taking into account that fear of “peak oil” (peaking production, leading to shortages) has been widespread for most of oil’s history as a commodity, Mr. Putin was remarkably sanguine —though he would be understandably wary of admitting to such worries if he had them.

[OilVoice Interview with Australian Based Oil and Gas Company Austin Exploration Limited](#)

My firm belief is peak oil will only come into consideration when the education and science into extraction techniques has peaked and that will not happen in the foreseeable future.

[IEA Says Conventional Oil Has Peaked: \\$1.5 Trillion Per Year Needed to Combat Peak Oil](#)

The World Energy Outlook 2011 is out from the International Energy Agency.

For me, the one number to hone in on is the daily projected oil demand in 2035.

That number is projected to be **99 million barrels a day**.

[Keep the assets, ensure our future](#)

Energy security is crucial for our nation and the selloff of energy assets may sabotage the future of New Zealand. According to the International Energy Agency, the world hit peak oil in 2006 and we are now on the downhill side of the curve with potentially as little as 30 years left before we are sucking the bottom of the barrel.

[U.S. Energy Independence – The Big Lie](#)

It is too bad that our 255 million cars can’t run on hot air. American presidents have propagated the Big Lie of energy independence for the last three decades. The Democrats have lied about green energy solutions and the Republicans have lied about

domestic sources saving the day. These deceitful politicians put the country at risk as they misinform and mislead the non-thinking American public. They have been declaring our energy independence for 30 years, but we import three times as much oil today as we did in the early 1980's. The CPI has gone up 350% since 1978, but the price of a barrel of oil has risen 800% over the same time frame.

[Nuclear-Based Electricity and Economic Theory](#)

The most important project in energy economics at the present time is understanding that optimal national energy structures of the future will be a mix of all sorts of items – nuclear, fossil fuels, renewables, various alternatives etc. The anti-nuclear booster club wants to eliminate nuclear from that collection, but fortunately they are going to be greatly disappointed. Once this is appreciated, some effort should immediately be put into comprehending perfectly a few basic characteristics of nuclear.

[Gillard Seeks to Open Uranium Exports to India in Reversal of Party Policy](#)

Prime Minister Julia Gillard is seeking to overturn a ban on Australian uranium exports to India, risking a battle with her Labor Party and the Greens as she tries to strengthen diplomatic ties and boost the economy.

“Selling uranium to India will be good for the Australian economy and good for Australian jobs,” Gillard told reporters in Canberra today. She called on Labor members to back the policy shift at the party's national conference next month.

[France's Possible Nuclear Split](#)

When it comes to France's economic convergence with Germany, top of the list is reducing labor costs to match German industrial competitiveness. Harmonizing energy policy is hardly a priority. Nuclear-powered France enjoys some of Europe's lowest power prices. But if the Socialist Party wins next year's elections, aping Germany's non-nuclear energy program may top the bill.

[Report Calls for Changes in the Energy Department](#)

WASHINGTON — Already under fire for granting a \$535 million federal loan guarantee to Solyndra, the Department of Energy now faces a critique from within.

On Tuesday, the department's inspector general, Gregory H. Friedman, issued a report calling for a wholesale restructuring of the department's far-flung laboratories and other operations. He warned that “painful” staff reductions were certain to come as Congress sought deep federal budget cuts in the months ahead.

In one of his more striking criticisms, Mr. Friedman wrote that the department spent nearly \$13 billion a year to run 16 separate laboratories but that only about half of that money went toward actual research, with 49 percent paying for overhead and capital

spending. That ratio is “out of sync,” he said, and could be improved by combining some operations. The report noted that the Energy Department has three centers for nuclear weapons work, two for Navy propulsion reactors, five for energy technology and 13 for general science. “The department’s research complex is organized essentially as it has been for over a half-century,” it said.

[Solyndra was asked to delay announcing layoffs until after 2010 vote](#)

Washington (CNN) -- The Department of Energy last year urged struggling solar energy company Solyndra to delay announcing planned layoffs until after the November 2010 elections, according to information made public Tuesday by Republican congressional investigators.

['Energy farmer' sees future in willow trees](#)

A farmer near Neepawa, Man. is growing one of Manitoba's first "energy crops" made from trees.

Four years ago, Roger Hanes planted an experimental plot of 26,000 willow trees in an attempt to prove the tree crop's viability as a heating fuel that would be more eco-friendly than coal or natural gas.

[Peak demand and positive stories](#)

Ethanol gets criticized because it doesn't reduce GHG emissions enough. If world oil demand essentially remains static, the potential reductions from ethanol is perhaps more valuable. And given that cellulosic ethanol, and advanced corn ethanol systems, promise significantly greater GHG reductions, ethanol would be even more valuable.

[A Room of Their Own for 2-Wheeled Commuters](#)

Some commercial buildings, spurred by New York City law, are carving out dedicated storage rooms for bicycles.

[The t-shirt designs of bicycling Renaissance man Russ Roca](#)



Why zombies?

For me, the zombie apocalypse is symbolic of a lot of things. Peak oil, natural disaster, climate change. It is sort of a gallows humor. In every zombie movie, one of the big dilemmas of the survivors is finding gas for their cars! The season opener of *The Walking Dead* starts with the survivor's RV breaking down and their search for parts. Every time I see a zombie movie, I just want to tell them to get a bike. So the zombie shirt is my funny response to that.

[Clean-air program offers cash to get old trucks off the road](#)

Similar to the federal Cash for Clunkers initiative in 2009, the Charleston air cleanup program, and others like it nationwide, offers truckers a \$5,000 incentive plus the scrap value of their truck, if it was made before 1994, to buy a 2004 or newer model truck, said Byron Miller, a spokesman for the state Ports Authority.

[Congress pushes back on healthier school lunches](#)

WASHINGTON – Who needs leafy greens and carrots when pizza and french fries will do?

In an effort many 9-year-olds will cheer, Congress wants pizza and french fries to stay on school lunch lines and is fighting the Obama administration's efforts to take unhealthy foods out of schools.

[Measure Seeks to Give Border Patrol Power to Circumvent Environmental Laws](#)

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — No one can recall the last time an illegal immigrant hiked into the rugged and remote wilderness of Glacier National Park in an attempt to slip into the United States. But that is not stopping some in Congress from proposing to give border

agents control over environmental laws in protected areas.

[What can U.N. climate talks in Durban deliver?](#)

(Reuters) - Delegates from nearly 200 countries meet in South Africa from November 28 for major climate talks with the most likely outcome modest steps toward a broader deal to cut greenhouse gas pollution to fight climate change.

[Climate change episode of Frozen Planet won't be shown in the U.S. as viewers don't believe in global warming](#)

An episode of the BBC's Frozen Planet documentary series that looks at climate change has been scrapped in the U.S., where many are hostile to the idea of global warming.

British viewers will see all seven episodes of the multi-million-pound nature series throughout the Autumn.

But U.S. audiences will not be shown the last episode, which looks at the threat posed by man to the natural world.

[Bill McKibben: Has global warming become a campaign issue?](#)

Conventional wisdom has it that the next election will be fought exclusively on the topic of jobs. But President Obama's announcement last week that he would postpone a decision on the Keystone XL pipeline until after the 2012 election, which may effectively kill the project, makes it clear that other issues will weigh in — and that, oddly enough, one of them might even be climate change.

[Just how much meat can eco-citizens eat?](#)

Meat is bad: bad for you, bad for the environment. At least, that's the usual argument. Each year, the doors to the UN climate negotiations, which kick off again in Durban, South Africa, on 28 November, are assailed by demonstrators brandishing pro-vegetarian placards. The fact is that livestock farming accounts for a whopping 15 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions. We can't all go veggie, so just how much meat is it OK for an eco-citizen to eat?

It's not just the demonstrators who are concerned about food's impact on the climate. This week, a major report concludes that food production is too close to the limits of a "safe operating space" defined by how much we need, how much we can produce, and its impact on the climate.

[China sea levels to rise up to 130mm](#)

Sea levels near China will rise up to 130 millimetres in the coming two decades due to global warming, a national scientific report has observed.

The rise in sea levels around China is predicted to submerge 18,000 sq km of coastal lowlands, Xinhua reported.

[Rising sea levels threaten Bahrain](#)

UP TO 22 per cent of Bahrain's land could be under water by the end of the century as a result of rising global sea levels, it was declared yesterday.

This is based on an Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme report, said Bahrain's UN resident co-ordinator Peter Grohmann.

[Carbon Trading Initiative a Success, Study Says](#)

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a 10-state program that has been testing a carbon dioxide cap-and-trade system, may be in trouble, with New Jersey planning to drop out and other states considering doing the same.

But a new study says the program has saved money for consumers, stimulated job growth and kept money in local economies in the states that signed up.



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