



## Drumbeat: April 14, 2012

Posted by [Leanan](#) on April 14, 2012 - 10:56am

### [Oil and coal-backed groups far outpace Obama, allies on energy ads](#)

WASHINGTON -- Energy has become a touchstone issue in the presidential race, and groups backed by oil and coal dollars have spent far more money on ads bashing the president's record than the Obama campaign and its allies have spent defending it, according to a new analysis by the Center for American Progress, a left-leaning Washington think tank.

Relying on the groups' own announcements and data provided to press clients by Kantar Media/Campaign Media Analysis Group, the Center's Climate Progress blog calculated that in the first three and a half months of 2012, "groups including Americans for Prosperity, American Petroleum Institute, Crossroads GPS, and American Energy Alliance have spent \$16,750,000 on energy attack ads."

In comparison, the Obama campaign and an affiliated "super PAC," Priorities USA, "have spent at least \$1.67 million defending the president's energy record," the analysis reported.

### [Upton: Allow more domestic drilling](#)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., Saturday called for more domestic oil drilling and a hold on further regulation of U.S. refineries.

Upton, in the weekly Republican media address, said President Obama's energy policies were contributing to higher gas prices.

### [What You Should Know About Exxon Mobil's Latest Ad Campaign](#)

If you were watching the Masters golf tournament last weekend, you would have noticed it was laced with ads from Exxon Mobil calling for....better science. That's right. The very company that funded decades of science denial takes it back. Sort of. ExxonMobil ranks high in a short list of powerful institutions that has done this country an enormous disservice in undermining the overall credibility of the scientific method in general, and climate scientists specifically.

## [Oil Caps Fifth Weekly Drop Since February](#)

Crude capped its fifth weekly decline since February as China's economic growth slowed to the least in almost three years and Saudi Arabia's oil minister said the kingdom is determined to see lower prices.

Futures dropped 0.8 percent after the National Bureau of Statistics said gross domestic product in the world's second- biggest oil-consuming country expanded 8.1 percent in the first quarter from a year earlier. There's no shortage of oil supply, and Saudi Arabia is working toward damping prices, Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi said today.

## [Gas prices could head lower for summer](#)

The recent run-up in oil and gasoline prices may have run its course - for now.

Thanks to easing demand from a slowing global economy and increased production from Saudi Arabia, the oil market is coming off a two-year cycle of tightening supply, according to the International Energy Agency. That's helped snap a 13 percent surge in oil prices since the start of the year.

## [Saudis committed to lower oil prices](#)

Al-Naimi recorded output in March at 9.9 million bpd, when he said Saudi Arabia was prepared to produce at its full capacity of 12.5 million bpd.

He identified \$100 a barrel as an ideal price for producers and consumers earlier this year.

Brent traded above \$120 a barrel yesterday and has risen about 13 percent this year as tightening US and European sanctions target exports from Iran.

There are some analysts who believe the world is at 'peak oil', meaning we will never increase oil extraction by significant numbers; certainly, not enough to meet growing needs.

## [Mexico candidate suggests Pemex sell stake](#)

Mexico's ruling party presidential candidate Josefina Vazquez Mota said on Thursday that oil monopoly Pemex should consider floating a minority stake, adding to calls for a more radical reform of the state-controlled giant.

## [Spain Government: Argentina Relations On YPF On Right Track - Report](#)

MADRID – Spain's energy minister indicated Saturday that concerns about Argentina's

forceful intervention in the local unit of Spain's flagship oil company appear to have diminished in the last 48 hours.

### [Scotland Offers Tax Break to Oil Companies Stung in U.K. Budget](#)

Scotland Energy Minister Fergus Ewing said he wants to entice investment in the oil and gas industry and become a hub for offshore wind developers by reducing corporate taxes levied in the U.K. government budget.

“The budget was difficult for us,” Ewing said today in an interview at Bloomberg News headquarters in New York. “Oil and gas producers want stability and we’re giving it to them. The tax-equity grab is not what people expected from the U.K.”

### [Shelling in Syrian neighborhood kills 1 after cease-fire](#)

BEIRUT (AP) – Syrian troops fired shells into rebel-held neighborhoods in the central city of Homs on Saturday killing at least one person, activists said. It was the first reported death from alleged government bombardment of a residential area since a cease-fire went into effect two days ago.

### [The Crisis in the Sudans: The Urgency of U.S.-China Cooperation](#)

The nexus of oil, war and humanitarian catastrophe is an opportunity for the powers involved (increasingly Beijing) to come together to press for a solution.

### [12 killed in al-Qaeda attack in Southern Yemen](#)

SANAA, Yemen (AP) – Al-Qaeda fighters attacked a security checkpoint in a southern Yemeni city on Saturday and killed four troops while losing eight of their own, a security official said.

### [Russia Says Iran Needs ‘Real Incentives’ to Resolve Nuclear Row](#)

World powers should offer Iran “real incentives” to allow full monitoring of its nuclear program rather than demanding an immediate end to uranium enrichment, Russia’s top official at talks in Istanbul said.

### [India replaces China as Iran’s top oil client](#)

GENEVA: India has vaulted to the top of the list of Iran’s oil customers, overtaking China, in a first-quarter buying surge ahead of tighter sanctions against Tehran this summer, data published by a leading industry consultant showed.

### [Iran employs off-radar oil shipping tactics to counter Western sanctions](#)

LONDON: Iran is concealing the destination of its oil sales by disabling tracking systems aboard its tanker fleet, making it difficult to assess how much crude Tehran is exporting as it seeks to counter Western sanctions aimed at cutting its oil revenues.

Most of Iran's 39-strong fleet of tankers is now "off-radar" after Tehran ordered captains in the National Iranian Tanker Co. to switch off the black box transponders that are used in the shipping industry to monitor vessel movements, oil industry, trading and shipping sources said.

"Iran, helped by its customers, is trying to obfuscate as much as possible," said a senior executive at a national oil firm that has done business with Iran.

### [Obama forms group to streamline natural gas policies](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- President Obama issued an executive order Friday, establishing a meeting of the minds to work on natural gas policies for his administration.

The executive order creates a new working group made of representatives from at least 13 government agencies, including the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency, among others.

### [China's Unconventional Gas Pursuits Threaten Australian LNG Build Up](#)

China has aggressive plans to increase the role of natural gas in meeting its burgeoning energy needs. Estimates suggest that the country may as much as quadruple its gas consumption levels last year by 2020 and is looking to meet this demand from a number of sources including LNG.

The opportunity has prompted oil majors like Chevron and ConocoPhillips to start work on multibillion dollar LNG projects in Australia to target demand from Asian markets and in particular from China. Chevron is presently involved in two giant LNG projects in Australia – Wheatstone and Gorgon. However, LNG imports suffer from a cost disadvantage over domestically produced gas or gas imported through pipelines.

### [On That U.S. Natural Gas Storage Surplus](#)

But for low prices ushering in a gas revolution in the U.S. Power Economy - we now burn enough gas to meet the nation's electrical needs to find ourselves compliant with the EPA's new stringent regulations ... for 2015 - that surplus would be around 350 Bcf bigger. Price is working and outpacing policy, fancy that ...

As it stands today, we're burning about 4.5 Bcf more natural gas, per day, to meet the electrical demand needs of the U.S. Power Economy, than we were this time last year, weather adjusted. This represents an enormous share grab at the hands of natural gas, which went from 20% to 27% of the national generation mix in just one year - sending coal off the grid, from 47% to 38%.

### [B.C. mayors steel themselves for fight against Kinder Morgan pipeline](#)

Local governments on B.C.'s west coast are girding for a fight with energy giant Kinder Morgan over its \$5-billion pipeline expansion plans to move more Alberta oil to the Vancouver Harbour for transport overseas.

A phalanx of mayors is vowing to fight the project, including coastal communities far from the pipeline but exposed to increased oil tanker traffic.

### [Atlantis papers show familiar BP pattern](#)

We now know why BP wanted to keep information about its massive Atlantis platform in the Gulf of Mexico a secret.

Thousands of pages of internal documents and emails, recently released in a long-running lawsuit, reveal ongoing safety issues, deficient design documents and a pattern of problems that are disturbingly similar to some of the company's past operating failures.

### [Florida seeks to delay approval of BP settlement](#)

(Reuters) - The Attorney General for the State of Florida has asked a federal court to delay granting preliminary approval of BP Plc's \$7.8 billion settlement with businesses and individuals suing over the massive 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill.

Attorney General Pamela Bondi, representing her constituents, said in a filing in Louisiana federal court on Friday that there is not enough information available about the settlement terms.

### [Brazil Judge Transfers 2nd Chevron Oil Spill Lawsuit To Rio Court](#)

RIO DE JANEIRO – A federal judge in Brazil transferred a second civil lawsuit against U.S. oil major Chevron Corp. (CVX) for the company's role in an offshore oil spill to a Rio de Janeiro court, according to court documents obtained Friday.

### [Cuts at Environment Canada mean fewer left to clean up oil-spill mess](#)

The unit at Environment Canada that responds to oil-spill emergencies will be dramatically scaled back and most of its regional offices will be closed to meet the cost-cutting demands of the federal government.

“My entire program, which is about 60 people nationwide, got notices” saying their jobs could be eliminated, one of the employees who works for the Environmental Emergencies Program said Friday. “Everybody in the program is going to be vying for positions because the organization is being cut in half.”

### [Total: Gas leak ongoing at Nigeria plant](#)

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP) — French oil firm Total SA said Saturday that a natural gas leak at one of its plants in Nigeria's crude-rich southern delta may have been going on for weeks.

The leak at its Obite natural gas site has forced the company to evacuate those nearby and led to daily monitoring of air and water surrounding the plant in Nigeria's Rivers state. However, Total's Nigerian subsidiary hasn't made any public statement about the leak since it likely began following an incident March 20, though the company has given near-daily updates about a similar leak at a plant off the United Kingdom in the North Sea.

### [Milne to propose real-time monitoring of gas wells](#)

State Rep. Duane Milne (R-Chester) thinks that gas wells in the state should be watched, just in case.

At a press conference at Rajant Technologies in Malvern on Monday, Milne announced that he is planning to introduce legislation to require the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and the state's county emergency management organizations to implement constant real-time safety monitoring and communications with each natural gas well in the Commonwealth.

### [A New Oversight Panel on Fracking](#)

In an effort to streamline federal regulation of the domestic natural gas boom, President Obama on Friday announced creation of an inter-agency task force to ensure what he called the “safe and responsible development of domestic natural gas resources.”

### [Spain Risks Breaking Law on Power-Tariff Deficit, CNE Says](#)

The Spanish government risks breaching the legal limit for the deficit in electricity-system revenues should demand fall short of its forecasts, the country's energy



regulator said.

“There are elements of uncertainty during 2012 that could lead to higher costs or lower revenues,” the Comision Nacional de Energia said in an e-mailed statement today. Those include “a declining trend in demand.”

### [Two nuclear reactors declared safe](#)

Two idled Japanese nuclear reactors operated by Kansai Electric Power Co have been declared safe and will need to be restarted, Japanese trade minister Yukio Edano has said.

Mr Edano made the comments at a news conference after Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda, two other ministers and himself met to discuss whether to allow the first reactor restart since last year’s Fukushima atomic crisis.

### [Energy conservation costly, experts say](#)

DUBAI // At Microsoft offices across the Middle East, high-efficiency lights and motion sensors installed in meeting rooms, kitchens and bathrooms ensure that lights are turned off when the rooms are not in use. Timers on copy and printing machines automatically turn off these devices after 7pm each day.

Such steps have cut consumption by 10 per cent, the company says, but it will not reap the financial benefits: there are fixed rates for energy and water in many of Microsoft's buildings across the Gulf, including its headquarters in Dubai Internet City.

This disconnect is a deterrent to saving energy for many other UAE organisations that, like Microsoft, do not own the buildings in which they are located.

### [Abengoa Hits Three-Year Low on Italy Solar Cuts](#)

Abengoa SA, the Spanish low-carbon energy developer, fell to its lowest in almost three years in Madrid as Italy’s solar subsidy cuts raised investor concerns that other euro nations may reduce support for the industry.

### [Germany Expects Installation ‘Rally’ to Beat Solar Cuts](#)

Germany’s solar industry expects an installation rush over the next six months as developers try to beat planned subsidy cuts in the second-biggest market for sun power.

### [Greenhouse gas rules drive up truckers’ costs](#)

Canada's truckers – including drivers of full-size pickups – are facing rising vehicle costs as Ottawa joins with the United States in imposing new greenhouse gas emissions standards starting in 2014 model years.

But the higher upfront costs should be recouped in a few years of operating the vehicles as trucks become more fuel efficient and reduce their consumption of high-priced diesel.

### [How Green Are Electric Cars? Depends on Where You Plug In](#)

IT'S a lot like one of those math problems that gave you fits in sixth grade: a salesman leaves home in Denver and drives his electric car to a meeting in Boulder. At the same time, a physicist driving the same model electric car sets out from her loft in Los Angeles, heading to an appointment near Anaheim.

For both, the traffic is light, and the cars consume an identical amount of battery power while traveling the same number of miles. Being purely electric, they emit zero tailpipe pollutants during their trips.

The test question: are their carbon footprints also equal?

The answer may be a surprise. According to a report that the Union of Concerned Scientists plans to release on Monday, there would be a considerable difference in the amount of greenhouse gases – primarily carbon dioxide – that result from charging the cars' battery packs. By trapping heat, greenhouse gases contribute to climate change.

### [Don't Kill the Electric Car](#)

Even when plugging into a less-than-ideal power supply, driving electric provides environmental benefits by helping conserve the nation's petroleum reserves.

### [Rethinking Some Old Habits, One of Them Close to Home](#)

Readers who give up print newspapers and switch to digital devices will gain a benefit many have probably not thought about: they will be slashing the carbon emissions associated with their news habit.



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