



Drumbeat: August 18, 2012

Posted by [Leanan](#) on August 18, 2012 - 10:37am

[Energy leader wants transparency on hydraulic fracturing](#)

Environmental concerns about hydraulic fracturing are legitimate, but banning the technique thwarts efforts to wean the world off dirtier fuels, the head of the International Energy Agency told a Rice University audience Friday.

The agency's executive director, Maria van der Hoeven, called on natural gas producers to improve transparency around hydraulic fracturing and its impact on aquifers and greenhouse gas emissions. Linger questions about the natural gas production technique sometimes called "fracking" are fueling opposition worldwide and could increase global dependency on coal, she said.

[Oil Rises as U.S. Consumer Confidence Improves](#)

Oil rose for a fourth day on reports as U.S. consumer confidence improved, signaling the economy is recovering, and rising tension in the Middle East.

Futures capped a third weekly gain as the Thomson Reuters/University of Michigan consumer sentiment index beat expectations and the Conference Board's leading economic indicators climbed more than forecast. Prices also gained as Hezbollah threatened to retaliate if Israel attacked Iran and security concern grew in Syria and Lebanon.

[Europe-U.S. Gasoline Seen Near 10-Month High in Shipping Survey](#)

The flow of European gasoline to the U.S. is poised to rise to an almost 10-month high, according to a survey of people directly involved in arranging cargoes.

[Obama Aide Says Using Petroleum Reserve Is an 'Option'](#)

"From a political standpoint gasoline prices are up 40 cents a gallon over the last six weeks. Going into an election you would ask yourself what is the government doing about it," said Andy Lipow, president of Lipow Oil Associates LLC in Houston. "On the other hand the cynics might say if the U.S. and other countries are considering a release of strategic stocks what do they know about a preemptive strike by Israel on Iran that

they aren't telling us."

[China Gains as \\$17.5 Billion Subsidy Curbs ONGC Buyouts](#)

Oil & Natural Gas Corp., India's biggest state-run explorer, is lagging behind Chinese peers in the race for overseas assets after subsidies to cap fuel prices drained profit by \$17.5 billion over the past decade.

"If it weren't for the subsidies, all that money would've gone into overseas acquisitions," Chairman Sudhir Vasudeva said in an interview. "We'd definitely have been more aggressive."

[Power cuts to be longer](#)

The AP Transco has announced enhanced duration of power cuts for domestic consumers and others following tripping of three thermal units and closure of a hydel plant, resulting in an abrupt loss of 1,076 MW of installed capacity to the grid which is equivalent to 20 million units per day.

[India has not withdrawn from Vietnamese oil block: Minister](#)

India has not withdrawn from oil and gas exploration in a block in the South China Sea where China claims territorial rights over blocks originally allocated by Vietnamese oil company PetroVietnam, the government has said.

[Qatar Petroleum JV seeks US LNG permit](#)

Golden Pass Products, a joint venture of Exxon Mobil Corp and Qatar Petroleum, is seeking US authorities' permission to export liquefied natural gas from a terminal near the Texas-Louisiana border, the Wall Street Journal said, quoting an executive.

[Air France: Diverted fliers asked for fuel money as 'precaution'](#)

Passengers on an Air France flight got an unexpected stopover in war-torn Syria after their plane had to make an emergency landing in Damascus.

The next surprise: "Passengers on Air France Flight 562 were asked to open their wallets to check if they had enough cash to pay for more fuel," The Associated Press writes.

[Arctic Drilling Will Begin This Year, Shell Official Says](#)

HOUSTON — Despite embarrassing delays and trouble with its equipment, Shell remains confident that it will get final approval from regulators and be able to begin drilling for oil in Arctic waters off the Alaskan coast this summer, the oil company's top Alaska executive said on Friday.

[As ATP Oil Files For Bankruptcy, CEO Blames Obama For Company's Collapse](#)

When I get Paul Bulmahn on the phone rumors are swirling that he's just days from putting his company, ATP Oil & Gas, into Chapter 11. He can't confirm it yet, but he wants to make one thing perfectly clear: If it does come to bankruptcy (which it did on August 17) it isn't his fault. The founder and chairman of publicly traded ATP (Nasdaq:ATPG), Bulmahn wants the world to know that the Obama Administration—and its illegal ban on deepwater drilling in the wake of the BP disaster—is to blame for the implosion of his company. Not him.

[NEB wants Enbridge's internal report on Michigan spill](#)

VANCOUVER -- The National Energy Board has asked Calgary-based Enbridge to provide documentation of improvements it has made since a massive oil spill in Marshall, Michigan two years ago.

[Keystone XL pipeline crosses political boundaries in Nebraska and beyond](#)

When TransCanada said its \$7 billion Keystone XL oil pipeline from Alberta to Texas would pass about two miles from this tiny town in central Nebraska — crossing 92 miles of the state's ecologically sensitive Sand Hills and parts of the vast Ogallala Aquifer — it stirred opposition throughout the state. Political boundaries crumbled as the pipeline proposal united Nebraskans across party lines and divided them within. Ultimately, it became a political litmus test in the presidential race.

[Keystone XL rival Enbridge avoids scrutiny of oil pipeline plans](#)

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — A major rival to the controversial Keystone XL oil pipeline project is vastly boosting its U.S. pipeline system, but it's avoiding the same scrutiny that federal regulators, environmentalists and landowners are giving Keystone owner TransCanada Corp.

Enbridge Inc. is proceeding largely unencumbered with plans to spend \$8.8 billion in the U.S. to transport greater volumes of petroleum to the Gulf Coast and other markets than TransCanada would with its Keystone XL pipeline project from Alberta, Canada, to the Gulf Coast.

[Pipelines, glut of cheap crude raise doubts over oil sands expansion](#)

Strained pipeline systems and a glut of North American crude will force Canadian oil sands companies to cut back on their ambitious expansion plans over the next several years, a major new report warns.

[Typhoon-triggered oil spill cleaned up in S China province](#)

NANNING (Xinhua) -- An oil spill triggered by typhoon Kai-Tak in the south China city of Beihai has been cleaned up, according to a local official.

[EPA Defeats Challenge to Higher Ethanol Levels in Fuel](#)

A challenge to an Environmental Protection Agency rule allowing higher concentrations of corn-based ethanol in gasoline was thrown out by a U.S. Appeals Court ruling that the groups pressing the case had no right to sue.

[America's Deficit Attention Disorder](#)

According to the World Wildlife Federation's 2012 Living Planet Report, at the current rate of consumption, "it is taking 1.5 years for the Earth to fully regenerate the renewable resources that people are using in a single year. Instead of living off the interest, we are eating into our natural capital." This is a path to never-never land. Unlike with financial deficits, simple debt forgiveness is not an option.

When we deplete Earth's bio-capacity—its capacity to support life in its many varied forms—we are not borrowing from the future; we are stealing from the future. Even though it is the most serious of all human-caused deficits, it rarely receives mention in current political debates.

[Protectionism clouds over green sector](#)

Coal will continue to power China's energy sector for a long time. The reason: China's new energy industry faces an unprecedented challenge because of the United States' anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations against Chinese wind power and solar energy products.

So China will need a "green revolution" in its traditional energy sector to reach its energy conservation target and achieve sustainable development.

[Electronics Recycling Fire Unnerves a N.Y. Town](#)

After a fire burned through a recycling plant for electrical equipment two weeks ago in Columbia County in New York State, the environmental tests that followed alone were cause for anxiety among residents.

[Brazil to Cut Taxes to Fight Greenhouse Gas, O Globo Reports](#)

Brazil's government will offer cheap financing and cut taxes for aluminum and pulp makers that reduce greenhouse-gas emissions, newspaper O Globo reported, citing Alexandre Comin, a director at the Development, Industry and Commerce Ministry.

[Victoria should brace for rising sea levels, more storms: climate change report](#)

VICTORIA — A risk assessment on climate change for the City of Victoria says it needs to start work now to prepare for rising sea levels, more storms, wetter winters and drier summers.

The assessment looks at the projected risks the city will face with changes in climate conditions by 2050.

[Australia's acute water shortages mapped](#)

The 2012 State of the Climate report revealed that 2010 temperatures were the warmest on record, and projected that average temperatures would rise by 1.0 to 5.0°C by 2070 when compared with the climate of recent decades.

Models in the study projected an increase in droughts, and also a rising number of 'intense' rainfalls.

[Bill McKibben: The Arctic Ice Crisis](#)

"When I took my first course in glaciology," Box says, "conventional thought had the reaction time of the ice sheets to heating on the order of 10,000 years." The ice sheet, scientists believed, was a mostly inert ice cube frozen fast at its bed; if the glaciers melted because of global warming, the process would be, well, glacial.

But in a series of scientific epiphanies beginning in 2002, researchers using GPS have found that melting on the ice's surface can cause large sections of the ice sheet to break free of its moorings in hours, not millennia. In 2006, scientists discovered that ice was suddenly pouring into the ocean at twice the rate previously measured, spurred by a pulse of warm ocean temperatures that undercut the glaciers from below. In two separate instances, Box correctly predicted which sections of a glacier would soon break off – sections, in each case, that were many times larger than the island of Manhattan.

[Chinese vessel traverses Arctic Ocean for first time](#)

China has completed its first voyage across the Arctic Ocean to Iceland using an

icebreaker. The Arctic's ice melt which experts attribute to climate change is opening new trade routes and exposing mineral resources.

A Chinese vessel has voyaged from the Pacific to the Atlantic via the Arctic Ocean for the first time in the country's history, as melting sea ice from climate change begins to open new trading routes.

[US carbon emissions in surprise drop](#)

US emissions of carbon dioxide blamed for climate change fell in 2011 and have slipped to a 20-year low this year as the the world's largest economy uses more natural gas and less coal, data shows.

The surprise drop from the world's second biggest emitter comes despite the lack of legislation on climate change but it was unclear if the change marked a trend or would be enough to meet goals on fighting global warming.



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