



Drumbeat: September 14, 2012

Posted by [Leanan](#) on September 14, 2012 - 9:50am

[Japan Draws Curtain on Nuclear Energy Following Germany](#)

Japan plans to scrap atomic power by the end of the 2030s, bowing to public pressure after the Fukushima nuclear disaster caused mass evacuations and left areas north of Tokyo uninhabitable for decades.

The country's first post-Fukushima energy policy approved today by Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda means the country will join Germany in abandoning the power source that helped both countries build world-beating economies and models for development from the destruction of World War II.

[IEA lifts forecast for growth of global oil demand](#)

Economic concerns in China and a nuclear outage in Japan are pulling global oil demand growth in opposite directions, said the International Energy Agency (IEA) yesterday in its monthly report.

The energy watchdog based in Paris lifted its forecast for global oil demand by 100,000 barrels per day (bpd) to 89.8 million bpd this year and 90.6 million bpd next year. "Concerns about the health of the global economy are also rising in the wake of bearish economic indicators from the US, the euro zone and now, increasingly, the engine of oil demand growth of the last decade - China," wrote the agency.

[Oil Rises to \\$100 for First Time Since May After Stimulus](#)

Oil rose to \$100 a barrel in New York for the first time since May as the Federal Reserve pledged further economic stimulus, while unrest in the Middle East and North Africa fanned concern that supplies will be threatened.

[UK prompt gas gains on shortages, demand](#)

LONDON/MILAN (Reuters) - British prompt gas prices rose on Friday, marking a fourth straight day of gains, driven by reduced supplies while cooler weather was expected to boost heating demand in some parts of the country.

Gas for Monday delivery increased over a pence to 61.75 pence a therm, gaining ground on a 19-week high achieved on Thursday, as the impact of maintenance in Norway and Britain continued to impact supplies.

[Northeast Lukoil Franchisees Publicize \\$9 Gas in Protest](#)

Drivers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania may be in for a shock if they pull into a Lukoil gas station.

About 57 franchise owners are protesting on Wednesday against the price of gas charged by Lukoil North America, a subsidiary of the Russian corporation, OAO Lukoil. The owners have posted gas prices over \$8 at their stations to draw attention to what they claim are the high prices charged to them that they must pass on to consumers.

"We are doing this because we are dying," said Khaled Kezbari, owner of three Lukoil gas stations in New Jersey. "Lukoil is charging us costs higher than the retail market. How can you compete? You cannot compete in the market like that."

[Gasoline prices push up U.S. consumer inflation in August](#)

(Reuters) - U.S. consumer prices rose in August by the most in three years as the cost of gasoline jumped, but there was little sign of a pick-up in underlying inflation pressures, which should allow the Federal Reserve to stay on its ultra-easy policy path.

[Industrial output drops most in three years on factories, storm](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Industrial output fell in August by the most in over three years as production slowed in factories and a hurricane temporarily shut down oil and natural gas rigs in the Gulf of Mexico.

Industrial production fell 1.2 percent, the Federal Reserve said on Friday. That was the steepest decline since March 2009. Analysts polled by Reuters had expected industrial output to be flat last month.

[Commodities Post Longest Rally Since 2010 on Fed Boost](#)

Commodities are set for the longest run of weekly gains since 2010 after the Federal Reserve said it will buy bonds until the U.S. jobs market recovers, fueling expectations raw-material use will rise.

[Northeast facing acute cooking gas shortage](#)

Agartala (IANS) Northeast India is facing a severe shortage of cooking gas since April after production in four Indian Oil refineries in Assam was hit.

Tripura Food and Civil Supplies Minister Manik Dey Friday said Indian Oil Chairman R.S. Butola has informed the state government that lower production of LPG (liquefied petroleum gas), and law and order problem besides flood in Assam are the key reasons behind the crisis.

[Norway Rejects Oil Industry Pleas on Pay Boom Amid Strikes](#)

Norway rejected pleas from the country's oil industry to help contain wage growth that producers say is hampering competitiveness in western Europe's largest crude exporter.

A government-appointed commission on oilrigs and drilling concluded last month Norway must cut labor costs and ease regulations to ensure petroleum isn't left in the ground.

[BASF Mothership Under Siege as Shale Forces Bock to Fight](#)

BASF SE has spent almost 150 years expanding its German chemical mothership into an organism the size of Midtown Manhattan, whose intricate web of pipes and interlocking plants use every bit of oil and gas brought in.

The so-called Verbund approach is being put to the test. The boom in U.S. shale gas hands competitors Dow Chemical Co. and DuPont Co. an 8 percent profit advantage because they pay less for natural gas, estimates Jeremy Redenius, an analyst at Sanford Bernstein Ltd.

[Kurdistan to keep Sept oil output steady in Baghdad deal](#)

(Reuters) - Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan said on Friday it would keep its oil production for export at 140,000 barrels per day this month before raising it to 200,000 bpd for the rest of the year, as part of a deal with Baghdad to end a dispute over oil payments.

Under the agreement, Baghdad will also pay 1 trillion Iraqi dinars or around \$857 million for foreign companies working in the Kurdish region, the Kurdistan Regional Government said.

[Are We Missing the Point on Peak Oil?](#)

I believe the world has already entered an era where nearly all of the inexpensive oil has been found and that what remains—even if it's a lot of oil—will be increasingly costly to

produce. And, something few people consider, pulling this expensive oil out of the ground will consume ever greater amounts of oil.

[Chesapeake loses bid to void Texas oil, gas rights award](#)

Chesapeake Energy Corp., facing claims by mineral rights holders in multiple states over canceled oil and gas lease offers, lost a bid to reverse a \$19.7 million judgment to a Texas lease owner.

[EU says Gazprom should set equal gas price for all European buyers](#)

Russia must agree to European Union requirements for an open natural gas market, the EU Energy Commissioner said, specifying that this implies that the price for imported Russian gas should be identical across the European Union.

"Our Russian partner understands our rules but doesn't accept them," Guenther Oettinger said at an energy conference in Lithuania. *"It can't be that gas in some member states is 30% cheaper than in other member states,"* he said.

[Concerns over oil price rigging will be investigated, says energy minister](#)

Energy minister John Hayes is to write to the Financial Services Authority about the many concerns – including evidence of the rigging of international oil prices – raised in yesterday's House of Commons debate on fuel prices.

[Fossil Fuel Industry Ads Dominate TV Campaign](#)

WASHINGTON — When Barack Obama first ran for president, being green was so popular that oil companies like Chevron were boasting about their commitment to renewable energy, and his Republican opponent, John McCain, supported action on global warming.

As Mr. Obama seeks re-election, that world is a distant memory. Some of the mightiest players in the oil, gas and coal industries are financing an aggressive effort to defeat him, or at least press him to adopt policies that are friendlier to fossil fuels. And the president's former allies in promoting wind and solar power and caps on greenhouse gases? They are disenchanted and sitting on their wallets.

[Turkey to start oil exploration alone in eastern Med](#)

Turkey's state-run oil firm TPAO plans to start offshore oil exploration on its own in 2013 in the Iskenderun-Mersin region of the eastern Mediterranean, after it failed to attract applications for joint exploration licences, officials said Reuters reported

[China surveillance ships near islands disputed with Japan](#)

(Reuters) - Six Chinese surveillance ships briefly entered waters near disputed islands claimed by Tokyo and Beijing on Friday, raising tensions between Asia's two biggest economies to their highest level since 2010.

Japan protested to China and urged that the situation not be allowed to escalate - an outcome neither side would welcome given the two countries' tight economic links.

Diplomats say Tokyo and Beijing would prefer to keep the row from spiraling out of control, but with China facing a once-in-a-decade leadership change, an election looming in Japan and mutual mistrust deep, managing the feud could be difficult.

[Japan set to win extended waiver of U.S. sanctions on Iran oil](#)

SINGAPORE (Reuters) - Japan has made deeper cuts in crude oil purchases from Iran since it secured an exemption from U.S. sanctions in March, putting the country in a strong position to obtain a renewal when the United States reviews the six-month waiver.

Japan was the first of Asia's top four buyers of Iranian crude to receive a waiver from the United States of tough new sanctions aimed at reducing Iran's oil income and persuading it to halt a nuclear programme the West suspects is meant to build weapons. Tehran denies its nuclear work has a military purpose.

[Egypt president: Protecting embassies an Islamic duty](#)

CAIRO (AP) -- Egyptian riot police clashed with protesters angry over an anti-Islam film blocks away from the U.S. Embassy in Cairo as the president went on state TV and appealed to Muslims to protect embassies, trying to patch up strained relations with the United States.

Several hundred protesters massed in Cairo's Tahrir Square after weekly Muslim Friday prayers and tore up an American flag, waving a black, Islamist flag. When protesters tried to move toward the embassy, several blocks away, they were confronted by lines of police who fired tear gas.

[Pro-al Qaeda group seen behind deadly Benghazi attack](#)

(CNN) -- A pro-al Qaeda group responsible for a previous armed assault on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi is the chief suspect in Tuesday's attack that killed the U.S. ambassador to Libya, sources tracking militant Islamist groups in eastern Libya say.

They also note that the attack immediately followed a call from al Qaeda leader Ayman

al-Zawahiri for revenge for the death in June of Abu Yahya al-Libi, a senior Libyan member of the terror group.

[A Cautionary Tale for Regulated Industries](#)

The lessons from BP's gulf explosion in 2010 took a dramatic turn for many regulated industries. Allying a "culture of corporate recklessness," the Department of Justice recently said that BP was guilty of "gross negligence" and "willful misconduct" in the Deepwater Horizon explosion. The company strongly disputed the allegations.

This new government charge has significance for BP because it could lead to triple damages under the Clean Water Act for each barrel of oil spilled. The penalties on this issue alone could total \$21 billion, assuming, as the government does, 4.9 million barrels escaped from the Macondo Well (BP says 2.7 million barrels). But the charge has broader significance for companies facing gross negligence or willful misconduct allegations under a number of regulatory statutes that impose triple damages for such conduct.

[Texas Posse Hunting for Halliburton's Missing Radioactive Device](#)

Texas may call out the National Guard in the hunt for a seven-inch radioactive rod used in drilling natural-gas wells, lost this week by Halliburton Co. somewhere in a 130-mile swath of the state's western oil fields.

[Why Osborne's dash for gas is not all it is cracked up to be](#)

The top priorities for Britain's energy policy should be safety and security - fracking fails on both counts.

[Lost art? Teens taught to drive a stick shift](#)

As teenagers lose interest in learning to drive -- why should they when they can just text their friends? -- the classic car industry is worried that it may run out of future customers.

After all, many among the young today may never have even ridden in a car with a stick shift and clutch, much less driven one.

[An Expiring Tax Credit Threatens the Wind Power Industry](#)

Mr. Sawyer and wind power companies are closely watching developments in Washington, where a tax credit benefiting wind farms is due to expire at the end of this

year. The implications of that could be especially significant in Texas, the top wind power state, which contains about a fifth of the nation's turbines and is building expensive transmission lines to support more growth.

[An Argument Over Wind](#)

With the wind industry facing the expiration of a production tax credit at the end of the year, the sector's main trade association is facing off against Exelon, the big power generation company, over whether the tax break should be renewed. Last week, the Wind Energy Association expelled Exelon as a member because the company opposed a renewal of the credit.

[Though Not Yet Open, a Huge Mine Is Transforming Mongolia's Landscape](#)

Even before its scheduled opening next month, the work on the huge Oyu Tolgoi mine project already accounts for roughly 30 percent of Mongolia's annual economic output.

The sheer scale of the mineral wealth to be found here — an estimated 41 million pounds of copper and 21 million ounces of gold — on the dusty edges of the Gobi Desert has long attracted mining executives from around the world. Now, after a decade-long effort, Canada's Turquoise Hill Resources, in a joint venture with the Mongolian government, is about to start pulling the mine's riches from the ground.

[U.S. Declares a Disaster for Fishery in Northeast](#)

BOSTON — The Commerce Department on Thursday issued a formal disaster declaration for the Northeastern commercial groundfish fishery, paving the way for financial relief for the battered industry and the communities that depend on it.

To many here, the declaration underscored the urgency of a groundfish depletion that has become apparent to many scientists and some fishermen who work in New England's waters.

[Humans and Nature: Can the Gulf Be Bridged?](#)

To be able to grieve for the loss of something, we have to first develop love and affection. It takes time. It takes a deep connection, cultivated emotions that emerge from knowing and experiencing a place or a person again and again. In his recent book, "Faith of Cranes," Hank shares his thoughts on this matter, inspired by his lifetime of loving southeast Alaska and watching it change.

[EPA to clean up lead in yard soil in N.J.](#)

The Environmental Protection Agency will begin digging up dangerous lead contamination this month around a dozen homes in New Jersey, part of one of the largest state efforts yet to re-examine health risks posed by soil near hundreds of old factory locations identified by a USA TODAY investigation.

[Plans for giant Antarctic marine sanctuary falter](#)

The United States and New Zealand have spent two years trying to agree on an Alaska-sized marine sanctuary where fishing would be banned and scientists could study climate change. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton took a strong interest in the outcome, regularly prodding diplomats, and New Zealand recently sent a delegation to Washington to hash out a tentative deal.

That compromise, over a region that accounts for less than 2 percent of New Zealand's fishing industry, turned into a flop this month when senior New Zealand politicians rejected it behind closed doors.

[Russia will not cut emissions under extended Kyoto climate pact](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia confirmed on Thursday it would not make cuts in greenhouse gas emissions from 2013 under the U.N.'s Kyoto Protocol, joining Canada and Japan in rejecting an extension of the plan for fighting climate change. The foreign ministry said Moscow would not join industrialised nations led by the European Union in signing up for cuts beyond a first round of commitments ending on Dec. 31, 2012.

[Warming sign in the Arctic: Starving female polar bear challenges male for food](#)

Wildlife biologist Ian Bullock is a seasoned visitor to the Arctic, but even he was surprised by what he saw last month: a thin female polar bear, shadowed by her cub, trying to challenge a much bigger, stronger male for food.

It wasn't much of a challenge, but it showed just how desperate she was, Bullock told NBC News on returning from his 10th straight summer cruise to the Arctic.

[Is the government gas plan going to bust the UK's carbon targets?](#)

The coalition's climate advisers say the UK is planning so much gas power it will be impossible to meet carbon targets; the government says it can have its cake and eat it. Who's right?

[Critics warn Japan's decision to phase out nuclear could be 'climate disaster'](#)

Today's decision by Japan's government to phase out Nuclear power by 2030 has been

branded a potential 'climate disaster' by critics, who say it will leave the country relying heavily on coal, gas and oil.

[White Roofs in Cities Could Reduce Rainfall](#)

According to new research out of Arizona State University, efforts to improve the reflectance of Arizona's cities by painting roofs white may be reducing rainfall across the state.

Published recently in the journal *Environmental Review Letters*, the study finds that average rainfall statewide could drop by as much as 4 percent if roof painting efforts continue. The increased reflectivity of these roofs has been found to modify hydroclimatic processes in the region by reducing what's called evapotranspiration, or how much water evaporates back into the air from the land and its plants.

[Melting glaciers key to greater reliance on hydroelectric power?](#)

(Phys.org)—The great glaciers of the Alps are melting. Several climate change scenarios, some of which are based on an average temperature increase of +4°C, predict their complete disappearance by the end of this century. As they retreat, the glaciers uncover cavities; these fill with meltwater, becoming lakes.

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) is funding a research project on the risks and possibilities of these new mountain lakes. Anton Schleiss, director of EPFL's Hydraulic Constructions Laboratory, is participating in the project. "Glaciers store water and transfer winter precipitation into summer runoff. Once they have disappeared, we will need to manage these new reservoirs, which will take over this water storage role."

[Melting Himalayas May Magnify Water Scarcity](#)

Many politically unstable areas of South Asia are "water-stressed," meaning the areas are facing water scarcity due to poor infrastructure or simply lacking enough water to meet demand.

The potential impacts of climate change on water scarcity could further inflame political tensions, finds a new report, "Himalayan Glaciers: Climate Change, Water Resources, and Water Security," released today (Sept. 12) by the National Research Council (NRC). Funding was provided by the Central Intelligence Agency.

[Arctic sea ice melt 'may bring harsh winter to Europe'](#)

The record loss of Arctic sea ice this summer may mean a cold winter for the UK and northern Europe. The region has been prone to bad winters after summers with very low sea ice, such as 2011 and 2007, said Jennifer Francis, a researcher at Rutgers

University.

"We can't make predictions yet ... [but] I wouldn't be surprised to see wild extremes this winter," Francis told the Guardian.

['Smart growth' strategies curb car use, greenhouse gas emissions: study](#)

A new study finds that smart growth approaches to urban planning could substantially reduce the number of miles that residents drive in a year. The research was published this week in *The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy*.

Smart growth focuses on the development of compact, walkable cities with houses and jobs located close together. By shortening residents' commutes, this form of urban design aims to cut transportation-related energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. California is already pursuing smart growth in order to meet emissions reductions set by the state's Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32).



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