



Drumbeat: March 9, 2013

Posted by [Leanan](#) on March 9, 2013 - 9:17am

[Big Social Costs Tallied in Regions With Scant Energy Access](#)

This is why I keep saying that the “energy quest” that’s needed to smooth the human journey in this century has two faces — one figuring out how the haves can use energy more wisely, the other figuring out how to get the benefits that come with modern energy to the billions without sustainable options right now.

[WTI Oil Rises to Cap Biggest Weekly Gain in a Month](#)

West Texas Intermediate crude rose after U.S. employers added more jobs than planned, signaling climbing fuel demand, while Brent oil fell to the lowest level of 2013 on increasing flows in a North Sea pipeline.

Futures capped the biggest weekly gain in a month as the Labor Department said that the jobless rate fell to a five-year low of 7.7 percent in February. The Brent Pipeline System is “approaching” its targeted flow rate of 80,000 barrels a day, an official for Abu Dhabi National Energy Co. (TAQA), or Taqa, said by phone. A leak shut the link shut for five days on March 2. WTI fell earlier as the dollar reached a 2013 high against the euro. WTI open interest rose to a record for a fifth time yesterday.

[Canada Heavy Oil Jumps Most Since September as Output Slumps](#)

Canadian heavy oil strengthened the most in almost six months on the spot market as weaker-than- expected output eased concern that lower refinery demand in the spring will keep the grade under pressure.

[Gas Rigs Drop to Fewest Since 1999 as Drilling Declines](#)

Oil and gas rigs in the U.S. fell for a third straight week to the lowest level since January after producers moved equipment out of gas plays.

[‘Secret energy revolution’ could hasten end to dependence on foreign oil](#)

A wealth of new technologies -- from underwater robots to 3-D scanners to nano-

engineered lubricants -- are transforming the energy exploration industry in ways that will hasten the end of America's reliance on Middle East oil.

That's the take on America's "secret energy revolution," according to a report in the *Washington Guardian*. And the proof is in the balance sheets: According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, monthly imports of oil peaked in Sept. 2006 at 12.7 million barrels per day and has declined 40 percent since then, to 7.6 million barrels in Nov. 2012.

[OPEC conspiracy drives up oil costs](#)

"Price-fixing by private companies on the OPEC scale would not be tolerated in any industrial country," observes M.A. Adelman, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor emeritus of economics. "In the United States, the officers of firms that engage in such activities go to jail. But the OPEC members are sovereign states, subject to no country's laws."

We can't drill enough to have an impact on prices — OPEC can simply drill less to offset our production and keep prices where it wants them. Similarly, we can build more fuel-efficient cars, drive them less and raise taxes on gasoline. It still won't help because OPEC can adjust their faucets and the price to its liking and our detriment.

[Saudi Feb crude output slightly higher at 9.15 mln bpd- source](#)

DUBAI (Reuters) - Top oil exporter Saudi Arabia pumped 9.15 million barrels per day of crude oil in February, an industry source said on Saturday, slightly up from the 9.05 million bpd it produced in January.

[The Philippines: Shell to slash fuel prices effective Sunday](#)

A major oil firm will slash prices of its fuel products on Sunday, following the lead of two smaller players in the oil industry.

Pilipinas Shell said the rollback will reflect changes in prices in the international oil market, radio dzBB reported Saturday.

[Ethanol Trails Gasoline as 'Blend Wall' Sends RINs to Record](#)

Ethanol weakened against gasoline as the value of renewable identification numbers for the corn-based biofuel jumped to a record on concern production and consumption won't meet U.S. targets.

[Venezuela's oil future a 'shambles' after Chavez](#)

(CNN) – Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, who died this week, built his support on a populist platform of sharing the country's oil wealth with the poor.

Yet Venezuela's economy, and the future of its oil industry, remains deeply vulnerable.

[Venezuela to maintain oil industry framework under Maduro](#)

CARACAS - Venezuela will maintain its oil industry tax and legal framework under the leadership of acting President Nicolas Maduro, the OPEC nation's oil minister said on Friday to reassure foreign investors after the death of President Hugo Chavez.

Rafael Ramirez told Reuters that Venezuela would continue to push for a minimum price of \$100 per barrel at the next OPEC meeting, and that he did not expect Chavez's death to push up crude prices.

[Dwindling Production Has Led to Lesser Role for Venezuela as Major Oil Power](#)

HOUSTON — President Hugo Chávez relished using Venezuela's oil wealth to project power internationally, nudging OPEC to raise oil prices when he could, showering allies like Cuba and Nicaragua with subsidized oil shipments, and mocking the United States while selling it his crude.

But Mr. Chávez's death on Tuesday has had surprisingly little impact on global oil markets, highlighting how Venezuela's dwindling crude production and exports have undercut its global power in recent years.

[Russia speaks up for its Venezuela trade ties](#)

Moscow: Russia said Saturday its relations with Venezuela would suffer should it lose military contracts established under the late president Hugo Chavez. Venezuela has purchased billions of dollars in Russian arms and is also a top investment target of the Kremlin-run oil company Rosneft.

[Venezuelan Oil Subsidies Still Buoy Neighbors, For Now](#)

Venezuela's late President Hugo Chavez was a tremendous supporter of Latin American countries, especially those sympathetic with his socialistic ideals. His vast oil reserves are the key source of economic aid.

But the former president didn't just help out his ideological peers like Cuba and Nicaragua. Chavez was also a great benefactor to key U.S. allies in the Caribbean, many of whom are now worried whether their vital oil life line is about to be shut off.

[Venezuela Election 2013: Key Factors That Will Determine The Vote](#)

CARACAS (Reuters) - President Hugo Chavez's death paves the way for elections within weeks that will test whether his brand of "21st Century Socialism" can survive without him at the helm.

[Libyan gas flows to Italy gradually resuming on Saturday: Snam](#)

MILAN (Reuters) - Gas flows from Libya into Italy were gradually resuming on Saturday after being halted for about a week following armed skirmishes, a spokesman for Italian gas grid operator Snam said.

"There is a gradual resumption of flows and we expect about 16 million cubic metres of gas today which will meet requests from the system," the spokesman said.

[Pakistan leaves little room to budge on Iran pipeline plan despite threat of US sanctions](#)

Pakistan says it is determined to build a gas pipeline with Iran despite the threat of U.S. sanctions for the move -- with a top Pakistani official suggesting the uncertainty in U.S.-Iran relations is a deciding factor.

"Can America guarantee us that they will never make friends with Iran?" Asim Hussain, adviser to the Pakistan prime minister on petroleum and natural resources, told Fox News. "Will Iran never come to terms with the world order? And if someone can give us that guarantee then we will not [build] that infrastructure."

[Iran, Iraq discuss energy ties](#)

Iranian Oil Minister Rostam Qasemi, heading a 9-member delegation, is in Baghdad, discussing oil, gas and electricity ties with Iraqi officials, the Shana News agency reported.

[Brazil oil states ratchet up protests over royalty cuts](#)

RIO DE JANEIRO (Reuters) - Brazilian oil-producing states retaliated on Friday against multibillion-dollar cuts made by Congress to their oil royalties with a wave of protests and threats to cut off most of the country's oil output.

The actions threaten to poison relationships between Brazil's states, saddle oil companies with losses and complicate efforts by President Dilma Rousseff to forge political alliances needed to pass legislation in the last 17 months of her term.

[Sudans to withdraw troops from buffer zone](#)

The defence ministers of Sudan and South Sudan will begin withdrawing their forces from a proposed de-militarized zone as the first step in implementing a series of agreements signed in September last year.

[UK's Centrica in talks to buy U.S. natural gas](#)

(Reuters) - Centrica is in talks with U.S. companies to secure Britain's first long-term liquefied natural gas (LNG) import deal, sources told Reuters, as prices at home surge and Middle East supply falters.

The UK's biggest household energy supplier has approached U.S. firms including Cheniere Energy and Freeport LNG, sources close to the discussions said, as Britain's own gas supply also dwindles.

[BP 2012 Reserves Replacement Ratio 6% Without TNK-BP - FT](#)

BP said that at a group level, its reserves replacement ratio was 77%. BP said it has averaged above 100% over the past 20 years, the FT said.

[Meet The New US Petroleum Pipelines](#)

Still confused why crony capitalist #1, the "rustic" Octogenarian of Omaha, and Obama tax advisor #1, Warren Buffett has been aggressively attempting to corner the railroad market, while the administration relentlessly refuses to allow assorted new petroleum pipelines from America's neighbor to the north to cross through the US (in gratitude for the former's generous "tax advice" and pedigree by association)?

[Conoco to Explore Arctic in '14](#)

Texas-based ConocoPhillips is set to begin drilling around two exploration wells in remote Arctic waters in 2014.

The oil major aims to explore and drill a prospect – Devils Paw – in the Chukchi Sea. The announcement was made by the Chukchi program manager at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) annual Arctic Open Water Meeting.

[Shell's Louisiana-to-Texas Ho-Ho pipeline running again](#)

(Reuters) - Shell Pipeline, a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell Plc, said on Friday its Houma-to-Houston (Ho-Ho) pipeline is back up and running. The company had shut a

part of the line earlier, following a small crude oil leak.

Shell estimates that a single barrel of oil had leaked, as the crew saw a pool about 10 feet (3 meters) in diameter in the soil, according to the company's report to the U.S. National Response Center.

[BP warns of rising costs from spill settlement](#)

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — BP is warning investors that the price tag will be "significantly higher" than it initially estimated for its multibillion-dollar settlement with businesses and residents who claim the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico cost them money.

[Report Sparks Debate Over Edison's Role in Reactor Woes](#)

A report on the causes of equipment failure at Edison International's San Onofre nuclear-power plant in California has fueled debate over what the utility knew about flaws in the gear and when it learned about them.

[Ferrari \\$1.3 Million Hybrid Hits Resurgent Luxury Market](#)

Ferrari, Bentley, Jaguar, and Rolls-Royce are roaring back with new leather-swathed models after a drop last year in European sales of ultra-luxury cars.

At the Geneva Motor Show this week, Ferrari showed a 1 million-euro (\$1.3 million) hybrid called LaFerrari. Bentley exhibited a revamped four-door Continental Flying Spur. Jaguar debuted the XFR-S, its fastest sedan ever. Rolls-Royce is adding a 245,000-euro coupe called the Wraith to its lineup.

[3 Ways Alternative Energy Cars Can Save Drivers Money in 2013](#)

Everyone knows that alternative energy cars can save you money on gas, but there are other ways that these cars can decrease the impact your means of transportation has on your wallet.

[KLM Begins Biofuel Flights Between New York, Amsterdam](#)

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, in partnership with the Schiphol Group, Delta Air Lines and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey christened the first in a series of biofuel-powered flights between Amsterdam Airport Schiphol and New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport on March 8. The flight of the KLM Boeing 777-200 also marked the beginning of a demonstration by Boeing and KLM of several advanced technologies aimed at improving operational efficiency, saving fuel and reducing noise and emissions.

[No smoking gun in NTSB report on Dreamliner battery fire](#)

Two months after the incident, and seven weeks since the Federal Aviation Administration grounded the Dreamliner, officials have yet to publicly explain the exact cause of the battery failure, or of a battery failure a week later on a Dreamliner flying over Japan.

[Stanford scientists calculate the carbon footprint of grid-scale battery technologies](#)

Americans take electrical power for granted whenever they flip on a light switch. But the growing use of solar and wind power in the United States makes the on-demand delivery of electricity more challenging.

A key problem is that the U.S. electrical grid has virtually no storage capacity, so grid operators can't stockpile surplus clean energy and deliver it at night, or when the wind isn't blowing.

To provide more flexibility in managing the grid, researchers have begun developing new batteries and other large-scale storage devices. But the fossil fuel required to build these technologies could negate some of the environmental benefits of installing new solar and wind farms, according to Stanford University scientists.

["Solar Freedom Now" Unveils Plan For Cutting Red Tape, Solar PV Soft Costs 50%](#)

Permitting, zoning, financing, contracting, installation, hooking up to the grid, and maintenance — the so-called "soft" costs of powering a home, office or business with solar energy — account for as much as 40% of the total installed cost of a solar photovoltaic (PV) system, according to the Department of Energy's Rooftop Solar Challenge.

[Major Grocer to Label Foods With Gene-Modified Content](#)

Whole Foods Market, the grocery chain, on Friday became the first retailer in the United States to require labeling of all genetically modified foods sold in its stores, a move that some experts said could radically alter the food industry.

[California Considering 25 Projects for Carbon Offset Credits](#)

California, the second-largest carbon-polluting state in the U.S. behind Texas, will decide whether to award its first carbon offset credits for 25 projects designed to cut greenhouse-gas emissions.

[Poland aims to pave way for 2015 climate deal](#)

WARSAW, Poland (AP) -- Hoping to win over EU critics of Poland's recent stance on climate change, the environment minister said Friday that the coal-powered nation will make every effort to pave the way for a lasting deal in 2015 when it hosts a U.N. global warming conference in November.

Last year, Poland vetoed the EU's road map for emissions reductions beyond 2020, drawing sharp criticism from environmental groups and EU officials.

[The Keystone XL Tar Sands Pipeline: A 21st Century Schizoid Climate Plan](#)

Canada harbors some of the great environmental Arctic treasures of the world, magnificent polar bears, wildlife and fisheries unique to its pristine Arctic shores. But the land of the Maple Leaf also is pushing policies that will destroy these natural jewels that already are showing signs of damaging impacts from climate change. Canada was the first to withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol, undermined climate change negotiations at the U.N, and is now ranked next to Kazakhstan in terms of its climate change record. And Alberta's massive carbon-polluting tar sands mining operation is second to none.

[Global warming's new frightening deadline](#)

In April 2009, the science journal Nature published a paper entitled Greenhouse-Gas Emission Targets for Limiting Global Warming to 2 C.

Its subject was the end of the modern world.

At the time, it attracted little notice. It was a half-dozen pages long. For laymen, its technical content was impenetrable.

[Food forecast may have China worried over global warming](#)

Last week's announcement by China's Ministry of Finance that the country will introduce a carbon tax, probably in the next two years, did not dominate the international headlines. It was too vague about the timetable and the rate at which the tax would be levied, and fossil-fuel lobbyists were quick to portray it as meaningless. But the Chinese are deadly serious about fighting global warming, because they are really scared.

[Insurance industry's climate change dithering could be catastrophic for global economy](#)

Some numbers to keep insurance executives reaching for the Ambien in the dead of the night: Extreme weather driven by climate change cost the US insurance industry \$32 billion in 2011. Superstorm Sandy alone led to some \$25 billion in insured losses last year, the warmest on record. And today climate scientists released a study showing

global temperatures have hit a 4,000-year high.

[CSI conference on Staten Island Hurricane Sandy aftermath provides clear take-aways](#)

Academics and government officials headlined panel discussions at the College of Staten Island, resulting in some very clear take-aways: Portions of the East and South Shores swamped by Sandy should be returned to Mother Nature and not rebuilt; the city's 911 system needs an overall, after trapped Islanders desperate for help resorted to contacting their elected officials via Facebook; the mental health traumas of the storm continue to linger; and the disabled and elderly were left to fend for themselves, with some tragic consequences.



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