



Drumbeat: April 8, 2013

Posted by [Leanan](#) on April 8, 2013 - 9:22am

[Proposed expansion of energy agency looks a seismic shift](#)

When the International Energy Agency was launched in 1974, the French foreign minister at the time, Michel Jobert, called it "an instrument of war". The IEA was the industrialised countries' counter to Opec and the first oil shock.

Now, as the Financial Times reported on Thursday, the IEA is seeking a closer association with the main emerging economies: the Brics (Brazil, Russia, India, China and the rather misplaced South Africa), plus Indonesia and Mexico. There is still a long way to go in negotiating their entry. But this move marks the biggest change in the agency's direction since its foundation.

[WTI Rebounds Following Biggest Weekly Drop in Six Months](#)

West Texas Intermediate oil rebounded after its biggest weekly drop in six months, snapping three days of losses. Brent's premium to New York crude was near the smallest it has been since June.

[Hedge Funds Cut Bets Most Since '08 as Prices Slump: Commodities](#)

Hedge funds reduced bets on a commodity rally by the most since 2008 as rising supplies of everything from copper to sugar and slowing U.S. growth drove prices to the biggest slump in six months.

[China depends more on overseas oil](#)

As China's energy demands grow, its dependency on imported foreign oil will continue to increase from the current level of 58 percent, according to Zhang Guobao, a former director of the National Energy Administration under the National Development and Reform Commission.

"China is importing an increasing amount of crude, which is the most crucial issue for the country's energy supply," said Zhang during the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference.

[Nigerian Troops Seek Gunmen Who Killed 15 Police in Delta](#)

Nigerian troops are hunting for militants who said they killed at least 15 policemen in the oil- rich Niger River delta, a military official said.

“The security forces are working to ensure the perpetrators” are tracked down, Ibrahim Attahiru, a spokesman for the army, said today by phone from Abuja, the capital.

[Blast near Damascus square kills 15, state TV reports](#)

(CNN) -- A car bomb Monday afternoon ripped through an area near one of the largest public squares in Damascus, Syria, killing at least 15 people and injuring dozens of others, Syrian state TV reported.

[Iran to Boost Gas Exports in Efforts to Cut Oil Sales Reliance](#)

Iran plans increase its natural gas exports as a way to diminish its reliance on crude sales, a senior Iranian Oil Ministry official said.

Iran will “witness a change in the revenues of the country from crude oil to natural gas,” said Javad Owji, managing director of National Iranian Gas Co., according to the state-run Mehr news agency. Owji, who didn’t specify how much Iran earns from oil and gas sales separately, pointed to the country’s goal to triple gas shipments to some of its neighbors.

[The End of Peak Oil?](#)

Just a few years ago, as the price of oil spiked to \$147 a barrel, the notion that the world was pumping as much oil as possible — that we had reached Peak Oil — was becoming an accepted fact.

After all, as prices rose, wouldn't it benefit oil producers to produce more oil if they could?

But global production could only rise around 10% between 2000 and 2010. In the United States, production declined steadily from 2000 (5.8 million barrels) to 2008 (4.9 million barrels).

The inability to bring more oil to market despite a huge economic incentive to do so was surely proof the world simply couldn't pump more oil.

[Peak Oil Not Dead: America’s Next Top Gamble](#)

The truth -- Peak oil has nothing to do with running out of actual oil.

Peak oil means we've peaked as far as finding cheap oil supply. And we don't believe the world will just "eventually" run out of cheap oil in 10 to 12 years.

It's already happening.

[Buying frenzy set to peter out in oil patch after US\\$50B in megadeals last year](#)

CALGARY — The buying frenzy that last year saw deal values in Western Canada's oil patch climb past US\$50-billion is unlikely to repeat itself, as infrastructure constraints and a glut of assets on the block weigh on transaction prices.

[GE to acquire oilfield services provider Lufkin for \\$3.3 bln](#)

(Reuters) - General Electric Co said it will buy oilfield services provider Lufkin Industries Inc for about \$3.3 billion to expand its oil and gas business.

[Japan's Tepco may run out of space for radioactive water](#)

(Reuters) - Japan's Tokyo Electric Power Co said on Monday it does not have enough tank space should it need to move contaminated water from storage pits that started leaking over the weekend at its wrecked Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

Two years after the worst nuclear disaster in a quarter of a century, Tepco is struggling with breakdowns and glitches in its jerry-rigged cooling system to keep reactors and spent fuel pools in a safe state known as cold shutdown.


[Enbridge, EDF unit buying \\$600-million Alberta wind project](#)

Enbridge Inc. and a subsidiary of EDF Energies Nouvelles have teamed up to buy the Blackspring Ridge wind generation project near Lethbridge, Alta., on a 50-50 basis from Greengate Power Corp.

The companies say Blackspring Ridge represents a \$600-million investment in wind energy but financial details of the transactions weren't disclosed in Monday's announcement.

[Residential Solar Power Heads Toward Grid Parity](#)

Photovoltaics are still, on average, a pricey, subsidy-dependent source of electricity. However, rooftop panels are beginning to beat the grid in a number of jurisdictions with

high retail power rates—and their ranks are projected to swell over this decade. A growing number of economists say that rapidly shrinking costs have turned distributed solar generation into a disruptive technology that's set for runaway growth. In fact, they say, it could ultimately upend the power distribution market. 

[Global Biofuels Production Will Reach Nearly 62 Billion Gallons by 2023, Forecasts Navigant Research](#)

BOULDER, Colo. (BUSINESS WIRE)- After more than a decade of healthy growth for conventional biofuels like ethanol and biodiesel, the next wave of advanced biofuels is nearing commercialization. The pool of commercially available biomass-derived fuels is expanding to include advanced fuels derived from non-food feedstocks and drop-in synthetic substitutes for gasoline, diesel, and kerosene-based jet fuel. According to a new report from Navigant Research, worldwide biofuels production will grow from 33.6 billion gallons per year (BGY) in 2013 to 61.6 BGY in 2023.

[Bio-fuels industry “under attack”](#)

The bio-fuels industry must combat the “negative mis-information funded by the trillion-dollar oil industry”, according to former NATO commander General Wesley Clark.

Now the co-chairman of US bio-fuels specialist Growth Energy, General Clark accused global oil companies of actively undermining the bio-fuels industry, despite the fact that many of them now have business units dedicated to this technology.

[Taping of Farm Cruelty Is Becoming the Crime](#)

Critics call them “Ag-Gag” bills.

Some of the legislation appears inspired by the American Legislative Exchange Council, a business advocacy group with hundreds of state representatives from farm states as members. The group creates model bills, drafted by lobbyists and lawmakers, that in the past have included such things as “stand your ground” gun laws and tighter voter identification rules.

One of the group's model bills, “The Animal and Ecological Terrorism Act,” prohibits filming or taking pictures on livestock farms to “defame the facility or its owner.” Violators would be placed on a “terrorist registry.”

[Culprit in Heart Disease Goes Beyond Meat's Fat](#)

The researchers had come to believe that what damaged hearts was not just the thick edge of fat on steaks, or the delectable marbling of their tender interiors. In fact, these scientists suspected that saturated fat and cholesterol made only a minor contribution to

the increased amount of heart disease seen in red-meat eaters. The real culprit, they proposed, was a little-studied chemical that is burped out by bacteria in the intestines after people eat red meat. It is quickly converted by the liver into yet another little-studied chemical called TMAO that gets into the blood and increases the risk of heart disease.

[Reducing waste of food: A key element in feeding billions more people](#)

Families can be key players in a revolution needed to feed the world, and could save money by helping to cut food losses now occurring from field to fork to trash bin, an expert said here today. He described that often-invisible waste in food—4 out of every 10 pounds produced in the United States alone—and the challenges of feeding a global population of 9 billion in a keynote talk at the 245th National Meeting & Exposition of the American Chemical Society.

[Florida Algae Bloom Leads to Record Manatee Deaths](#)

Florida's endangered manatees, already reeling from an unexplained string of deaths in the state's east coast rivers, have died in record numbers from a toxic red algae bloom that appears each year off the state's west coast, state officials and wildlife experts say.

[Slaking a Region's Thirst While Cleaning Its Beaches](#)

Even in this water-starved region, storm and other runoff has become the primary source of water pollution. After the rare rains, runoff drags heavy metals, pesticides, cigarette butts, animal waste and other pollutants into streams and rivers and eventually to the Pacific Ocean, turning Los Angeles County's beaches into the filthiest in the state.

But now, local officials are trying to deal with runoff pollution and another problem — the lack of drinking water — with an ambitious plan to make the runoff drinkable.

[Scientists Question Impact as Vineyards Turn Up in New Places](#)

For more than a decade, wine experts have discussed the impact of climate change on wine grapes, agriculture's diva, a marquee crop nurtured and pampered around the world.

Now scientists are raising a new question: when grapes are transported to new areas, assuming warming weather and flagging rain make current regions unsuited to such harvests, what will the crop's arrival do to the animals and plants already in residence?

[Bill McKibben: How Do You Solve a Problem Like the Democrats?](#)

Administration insiders keep insisting, ominously enough, that the president doesn't think Keystone is a very big deal. Indeed, despite his amped-up post-election rhetoric on climate change, he continues to insist on an "all-of-the-above" energy policy which, as renowned climate scientist James Hansen pointed out in his valedictory shortly before retiring from NASA last week, simply can't be squared with basic climate-change math.

All these men and women have excuses for their climate conservatism. To name just two: the oil industry has endless resources and they're scared about reelection losses. Such excuses are perfectly realistic and pragmatic, as far as they go: if you can't get re-elected, you can't do even marginal good and you certainly can't block right-wing craziness. But they also hide a deep affection for oil industry money, which turns out to be an even better predictor of voting records than party affiliation.

[Why a Canadian Carbon Tax Would Be More Pain Than Gain](#)

Alberta's carbon levy isn't exactly a carbon tax but the more that national carbon taxes are discussed, especially in the U.S., the closer we are to facing their implementation. As carbon taxes have entered the discussion with regard to U.S. economic reform, Canada might soon find itself having to harmonize with an aggressive U.S. carbon tax regime. That makes this a good time to review the problems with carbon taxes, which are significant.

[Super-efficient laptop, high-speed electric car to be reality](#)

New Delhi -- A laptop that runs for eight hours without a recharge or a high-speed electric car covering around 300 km in one fill may appear a distant dream for many Indians. But, it would soon be a reality with India set to enter the highly competitive world of 'super-energy efficient' appliances.

[Enterprises should adapt to climate change: R.K. Pachauri](#)

Kolkata (IANS) Stressing on the need to "mitigate the emissions of greenhouse gases as part of the overall solution", renowned environmental scientist Rajendra K. Pachauri Saturday said management of enterprises across the globe will have to adapt to impact of climate change.

[Eight steps to climate-proof development in Africa](#)

Climate change must be integrated into the post-2015 agenda, as ignoring it may condemn many Africans to a life of poverty.

[Rising Seas Swallow 8 Cities in These Climate Change GIFs](#)

On February 8 he got in touch with Remik Ziemlinski, from Climate Central, who had helped the Times create the maps and he received the high-resolution maps from him. Lamm then chose different U.S. landmarks to illustrate the potential floods and found stock photos of the landmarks (he initially wanted to use screenshots of Apple 3D Maps but couldn't get permission from Apple to use them). He decided to use the same levels the Times had. To "figure out the depth of flooding for each sea level rise," he used Google Earth and topography maps.

[Oceans may explain slowdown in climate change - study](#)

OSLO (Reuters) - Climate change could get worse quickly if huge amounts of extra heat absorbed by the oceans are released back into the air, scientists said after unveiling new research showing that oceans have helped mitigate the effects of warming since 2000.

Heat-trapping gases are being emitted into the atmosphere faster than ever, and the 10 hottest years since records began have all taken place since 1998. But the rate at which the earth's surface is heating up has slowed somewhat since 2000, causing scientists to search for an explanation for the pause.

[Poll: Global warming worry heats up](#)

Americans' concerns about global warming have inched up in recent years, according to a new poll on Monday.

Fifty-eight percent of those surveyed are concerned a great deal or a fair amount about global warming, Gallup found.

[How US energy policy fails to address climate change](#)

Current U.S. energy policy is, in fact, a hodgepodge of disconnected policies designed for specific constituencies with no coherent goal. The country has subsidies for fossil fuels, subsidies for nuclear power, subsidies for wind and solar, and subsidies for insulating and retrofitting buildings. We also have energy standards for some appliances and miles per gallon standards for automobiles.

What never gets asked and answered definitively in the policy debate is this: What should our ultimate goal be and when should we aim to achieve it? The first part of the question has elicited so many answers from so many constituencies that I may not be able to represent them all here. But here is an attempt to categorize the main lines of thinking concerning the country's energy goals:



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