



## DrumBeat: March 20, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on March 20, 2007 - 8:55am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Bush pitching alternatives to automakers](#)

President Bush will get a chance on Tuesday to smooth over hard feelings that arose last year when he twice postponed meeting with executives of U.S. automakers.

In a visit that will carry symbolism for struggling companies that were once a mainstay of the U.S. economy, Bush will tour Ford Motor Co. and General Motors Corp. factories in the Kansas City area to get a glimpse of their latest hybrid cars and pitch his alternative-energy ideas.

### [Power play](#)

The green economy is booming, but you don't have to build a solar power station to get a piece of the action. There's literally a land rush on as renewable-energy companies look to secure locations for wind farms and solar arrays. If you move fast, you may be able to buy and flip the rights to the downtown rooftops and rural ridges that renewable-energy developers regard as prime real estate. There are two plays in this game, wind and solar, and each has its own rules.

### [Soybeans in your gas tank](#)

Inspired to launch a renewable-energy business, [John] Plaza chose biodiesel, a clean-burning alternative to petroleum diesel that can be made from most types of vegetable oil. He cashed in his 401(k), mortgaged his home and sold his ski boat to buy a 5,000-square-foot warehouse in an industrial section of Seattle.

### [Beyond Petroleum: UC Berkeley Sells Out to Energy Giant](#)

Could this be a “win-win” agenda for the University, the public, the environment, and industry? Hardly. In addition to overwhelming the University’s research agenda, what scientists behind this blatantly private business venture fail to mention, is that the apparent free lunch of crop-based fuel can’t satisfy our energy appetite, and it will not be free, or environmentally sound.

## [OPEC "Complacency" To Send Oil Price On Upward Spiral](#)

The decision by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to maintain its current output policy Thursday could lead to a sharp spike in oil prices, warned the London-based Centre for Global Energy Studies Monday.

"OPEC's complacency in Vienna has set the scene for another upward price spiral," said the CGES in its monthly oil report.

Ahead of the peak summer demand season, the group warned that "OPEC needs to raise output to let refiners boost transport fuel stocks in 2Q...Refiners will need to boost runs rapidly and to do so they will need more crude than is currently available," said CGES.

## [Workers hint at concessions to aid an ailing Pemex](#)

Petróleos Mexicanos, the world's third-largest crude producer by volume, may find union leaders open to reducing unfunded pension debt and increasing worker flexibility when contract negotiations get under way.

Carlos Romero Deschamps, head of the 124,000-member oil workers union, said the time has come to tackle problems that have run up Pemex's debt, resulted in imports of natural gas and gasoline and caused crude reserves and production to decline. In the coming weeks, the union and Pemex will begin talks to renew the current two-year contract, which expires on Aug. 1, he said.

## [Angola, one of the poorest places on Earth, is an oil industry darling](#)

A corrupt, underdeveloped and war-scarred country, Angola, a West African country, is one of the poorest places on earth. But ask any energy executive and another picture emerges: a place of immense riches, solicitous of foreign investors, and among the fastest growing oil exporters in the world.

## [South Africa, Russia explore energy ties](#)

South Africa is considering helping Russian state oil firm Rosneft and gas giant Gazprom in making liquid fuel from natural gas or coal, a cabinet minister said on Monday.

## [India not keen on binding global pact on emissions](#)

India is not keen to sign any global agreement on limiting emissions, however, New Delhi

is willing to take only voluntary steps in the area of energy efficiency and reduction of emissions. With increasing global concerns on climate change, the discussions on energy efficiency, reduction in emissions and the move to renewable forms of energy have become more intense.

### [Three Kidnapped in Southeastern Nigeria – Police](#)

Two foreigners and one Nigerian were kidnapped in southeastern Nigeria over the weekend, police officials said Monday, raising fears that a spate of abductions in the country's volatile, oil-rich Niger delta region was spreading to other areas.

### [America's Farmers--the Arabs of the Midwest](#)

Now, having spent my youth on a farm, I am sympathetic to farmers and agriculture in general. I have no quarrels with this price increase and the profits it brings to our farmers. In fact, I think it's great.

Clearly, though, not all would agree.

Certainly not the biofuel naysayers who saturate the Internet with deceptive stories and manufactured "data."

### [Demand for oil crops forecast to increase](#)

The predicted demand from the biofuel market for oil and starch crops from 2010 was likened to "a steamroller about to hit us", a farmers' meeting was told.

### [Investors Managing \\$4 Trillion Call on Congress to Tackle Global Climate Change](#)

For the first time, dozens of institutional investors managing \$4 trillion in assets today called on U.S. lawmakers to enact strong federal legislation to curb the pollution causing global climate change. Joined by a dozen leading U.S. companies, the investor group outlined the business and economic rationale for climate action as they called for a national policy that reduces greenhouse gas emissions consistent with targets scientists say are needed to avoid the dangerous impacts of global warming.

### [Animal Fats into Jet Fuel](#)

A team of NCSU scientists and engineers says it has developed a biofuels technology capable of converting animal fats - including lipids from dead chickens, hogs and cattle - into fuel for commercial airliners and fighter jets.

## [Department of Energy Submits \\$23.6 Billion Spending Plan to Congress for FY'07](#)

U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today submitted the Department's \$23.598 billion spending plan to Congress for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007, a \$45 million (0.2%) increase over the FY'07 request, as a result of the FY'07 Continuing Resolution. The spending plan will allow DOE to continue making marked progress in achieving President Bush's goal of bringing more clean energy sources to market to help cut dependence on fossil fuels, increasing our energy and economic security and boosting competitiveness.

## [Report: Shell eyes other oil sands firms](#)

Anglo-Dutch giant Royal Dutch Shell may be considering deals or takeovers of Canadian oil sands players that need access to refining, the National Post reports.

## [Gulf governments plan oil pipelines](#)

Gulf governments are planning oil pipelines that would bypass the world's most vulnerable energy choke point, the Strait of Hormuz, aiming to avoid possible Iranian threats to global oil shipments.

If built, two pipelines could ferry as much as 6.5 million barrels of oil a day around the strait, an amount equal to nearly 40 percent of the daily exports currently shipped through the narrow channel at the entrance of the Gulf.

## [Disappointments From PetroChina May Just Be Beginning](#)

PetroChina retained its title as Asia's most profitable company, posting record earnings of 142.2 billion yuan (\$18.2 billion) for 2006. However, the results were below analyst expectations and investors were dismayed by a 13% slide in second-half earnings as costs rose and refining losses deepened.

...A number of analysts appear to believe that the disappointments are just beginning.

## [The Mexican Peak Oil Crisis: Lowest rate of oil output in seven years](#)

Sean Brodrick at Money and Markets writes that it appears Peak Oil has affected Mexico, as, "In December 2005, Mexico sent the U.S. 1.7 million barrels of oil per day (bpd). This past December, Mexico only exported 1.2 million bpd to the U.S."

## [New maps may unlock giant "heavy oil" reserves, expert says](#)

Some of the world's largest—but hardest to reach—oil reserves could be tapped with the help of a little-known scientific field called rock physics, a Canadian scientist says.

### [As water grows scarce, nuclear power can help](#)

Because nuclear power produces large amounts of energy without emitting global-warming gases, it is drawing increasing attention. But it also can play a key role in dealing with another environmental problem that we can't afford to ignore: water shortages.

### [Uganda: Fuel Shortage Gets Worse](#)

MTN's spokesperson Tina Byaruhanga said telephone communication is not likely to be disrupted, unless the shortage persists. MTN Uganda uses 150,000 litres of diesel per month to run more than 350 base stations countrywide.

### [Understanding Empire: Hierarchy, Networks and Clients](#)

The Somali experience in failed empire-building reveals another even darker side of imperialism: A policy of 'rule or ruin'. The Clinton regime's failure to conquer Somalia was followed by a policy of playing off one brutal warlord against another, terrorizing the population, destroying the country and its economy until the ascent of the Islamic Courts Union. The 'rule or ruin' policy is currently in play in Iraq and Afghanistan and will come into force with the impending Israeli-backed US air and sea attack on Iran.

### [Official defends editing climate papers](#)

A former White House official accused of improperly editing reports on global warming defended his editing changes Monday, saying they reflected views in a 2001 report by the National Academy of Sciences. House Democrats said the 181 changes made in three climate reports reflected a consistent attempt to emphasize the uncertainties surrounding the science of climate change and undercut the broad conclusions that man-made emissions are warming the earth.

### [Spending on forecasting can offset climate warming threat](#)

Every euro spent on weather forecasting technology can bring sevenfold savings in dealing with the consequences of climate change, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) said Monday.

### [Ex-CIA chief says U.S. must act on climate](#)

The United States must act to cap its emissions of greenhouse gases and join the fight against climate change or risk losing global leadership, a former CIA director said in a report released on Monday.

### Bill McKibben: [Global warming knocking at your door](#)

If you take global warming seriously, for instance, the prospect of using 36 calories of energy to grow and transport one calorie of California lettuce east doesn't make much sense. Peak oil and climate change alone may mean that the economy will grow gradually less national and global, and more regional and local.

### [Esso/BHP could put carbon under sea](#)

The gas conditioning plant is required to treat new production from the Kipper gas field. The downside is that it would emit a million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> every year. While not quite in the same league as a coal-fired power station, this is not the right approach to achieving urgent CO<sub>2</sub> reductions.

### [Eco-Idiots and Global Warming](#)

The scientifically unsustainable theories of global warming are bad enough without the ecoalarmists who fabricated the myth in order to justify oil price gouging by the oil barons to curb the demand for oil.

### [DOE solicits more oil for U.S. reserves](#)

The U.S. Department of Energy announced its aim to buy up to 4 million barrels of crude oil for the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

The two sites that may receive either some or all of the additional reserves are the West Hackberry, La., site, and the Bryan Mound, Texas, site. Energy Department will accept bids through April 3 and make final decisions by the following week.

### [India to build 5 MT crude oil strategic reserve](#)

India will build its first strategic crude oil storage of 5 million tonnes by 2012 and will raise it to 15 million tonnes in the next phase as part of steps to ensure energy security, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Tuesday.

### [China may build strategic oil reserve in Lanzhou to store Kazakhstan crude](#)

China may select Lanzhou in northwestern China's Gansu province for the Phase II strategic oil reserve programme, to store crude from Kazakhstan, the official Shanghai Securities News reported, citing a China National Petroleum Corp advisor.

### [The Effects of Rising Fuel Costs on U.S. Trade](#)

The dollar/oil relationship must be maintained to keep the dollar as the International Reserve Currency. However, the price of oil is expected to rise steadily as the supply/demand imbalance increases and the value of the dollar declines. Rising oil prices result in increasing inflation, negatively impacting the global economy, particularly oil-dependent economies such as the U.S. An increase in inflation could negatively affect the demand for the U.S. dollar. If the demand for the dollar decreases substantially, the dollar/oil relationship could be challenged by the major oil producing countries.

### [Norway: Arctic reserves are key energy supply, but environment must be protected](#)

"If the U.S. Geological Survey is right, 25 percent of the world's undiscovered petroleum reserves could be found in the Arctic. Thus, the Arctic region could be part of the solution to the growing energy needs of the world," said Oil Minister Odd Roger in opening a conference on the northern region.

### [Canada to end oil sands aid, add green-car rebates](#)

Canada's minority Conservative government, pressured to do more on the environment, will phase out some oil sands tax incentives, introduce rebates for hybrid vehicles, tax gas guzzlers and subsidize renewable fuels.

### [Oil, shipping gain as Arctic warms](#)

Global warming, blamed for melting polar bears' icy Arctic habitat, could be a boon to the shipping and oil industries in the far North, according to a new U.S. report.

### [Kremlin May Force BP To Share Oil Venture](#)

BP has warned western investors that it could soon be forced to share control of its highly profitable Russian joint venture, TNK-BP, with a Kremlin-controlled energy group such as Gazprom or Rosneft.

## [Oil Technology Still Poor in Nigeria](#)

THE Senate President, Chief Ken Nnamani has regretted that even with the creation of the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) in 1973, use of update technology as the key to the transformation of Nigeria's oil and gas industry is lacking, hence leading scarcity and conflicts invariably.

## [Switchgrass: Ideal for Biofuel?](#)

In the quest for economically viable cellulosic ethanol, switchgrass has garnered attention as a hardy, low-cost energy crop. While cellulosic ethanol is still agreed to produce emissions benefits over corn-based ethanol, and while the adaptability of switchgrass to different growing conditions remains one of its virtues, some farmers who have grown switchgrass say the crop's cost of production can be considerably more than corn.



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