



## DrumBeat: January 5, 2007

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Europe lays out plan to tackle energy dilemma — but will governments and consumers balk?](#)

An energy crunch that chokes fuel supplies, dims the lights at homes and workplaces, and ravages Western economies may no longer be the stuff of 1970s history books. It could be a vision of the near future.

The 1970s oil crisis gave Western countries a glimpse of what life is like when the energy supply isn't enough to go around. Worried that an even bigger crisis lies in wait, the European Commission is presenting an energy "roadmap" on Jan. 10 that aims to steer the bloc's 490 million people in a different direction.

### [Oil and tensions bubble beneath the surface](#)

"The production of natural resources is liable to give rise to various types of political frustrations within a country." That is the view of such leading economists as Jeffrey D. Sachs, and Nobel Prize winner Joseph E. Stiglitz, writing in the introduction to 'Escaping the Resource Curse' a book to be released by Columbia University Press in June 2007, which cites Principe and Sao Tome as one country at risk.

The authors warn that, "resource-rich countries grew less rapidly than resource-poor countries during the last quarter of the twentieth century." Plus, they said, "[research suggests] a strong association between resource wealth and the likelihood of weak democratic development, corruption, and civil war."

### [Fort Lewis College to Host Lecture on the Future of Oil and Natural Gas](#)

On Tuesday, January 9, at Fort Lewis College, Noble Hall Room 125 from 7-9pm, Southwest Colorado Renewable Energy Society and Fort Lewis College Environmental Center will present a free talk by Steve Andrews entitled "Peak Oil and Natural Gas Update."

Andrews will present the most current information about the evolving peak oil and natural gas challenges and intelligent responses to those challenges. Andrews is co-founder of the Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas ([www.aspo-usa.com](http://www.aspo-usa.com)) and a Denver based energy consultant. ASPO is a nonprofit, nonpartisan education outreach

organization.

### [Independence Day: Toward Energy Self-Sufficiency](#)

As our energy supplies decline and environmental challenges escalate, we can expect that our energy networks - our fueling stations, electrical grid, and natural gas pipes - may become less reliable than they are today. Currently, our buildings and transportation systems are extremely brittle and susceptible to energy instability.

### [Shortage of Oil Rigs Triples Prices in India](#)

Reliance Industries and Oil & Natural Gas are among Indian explorers that expect to pay more for deepwater rigs this year as shortages caused prices to triple in the world's second-biggest market for the rigs.

"This is the tightest rig market I have seen in my entire career," U.N. Bose, a director at Oil & Natural Gas, who has spent 31 years in exploration, said in a telephone interview from New Delhi last Thursday.

### [India against bringing oil assets under state control](#)

New Delhi: India today said it would not follow the Russian model of 'Resource Nationalisation' as confining oil and gas reserves to public sector can breed inefficiencies through sub-optimal utilisation of resources.

### [Russia, Belarus say oil row won't hit Europe supply](#)

MOSCOW/MINSK - Russia and Belarus promised on Thursday to keep pumping oil to Europe, after Minsk slapped a duty on transit shipments of Russian crude in a trade dispute that has shaken the ex-Soviet states' strategic alliance.

### [World's Largest Gas Pipeline Proposed to Run Through Amazon](#)

Plans to build the world's largest natural gas pipeline through 5,000 miles (8,047 kilometers) of South American wilderness are prompting warnings of environmental calamity.

### [Energy corridor designation falls behind schedule](#)

The designation of thousands of miles of “energy corridors” through 11 states, mandated by Congress in 2005 and meant to be implemented by August 2007, is proving to be more difficult than anticipated.

### [GM Picks Hybrid Battery Partners](#)

GM wants to double the fuel efficiency of the SUV and has committed to lithium ion batteries as the technology of choice.

### [Southern Africa: 2007 a Watershed Year for Region](#)

The next 12 months are set to be a watershed period for southern Africa as it marks the dawn of a potential energy crisis as well as the official start of the home-stretch towards a unified regional economic bloc.

### [China forges ties with Africa](#)

BISSAU, Guinea-Bissau — China paid for the marble and tile parliament building soaring above the crumbling homes of this former Portuguese colony, and is also promising a dam and a military hospital — all with none of the political strings Western donors might attach.

Intent on cementing ties across Africa, China is active even in impoverished Guinea-Bissau, a small nation with little industry, no oil and few exports.

### [China Turns Mekong Into Oil-Shipping Route](#)

BANGKOK - As energy hungry China turns the ecologically fragile Mekong river into an oil-shipping route, green activists and environmentalists in South-east Asia worry that spillages could destroy the livelihoods of millions of people residing along the lower reaches of the region's largest waterway.

### UK: [Calls for more spending on renewable energy](#)

LONDON - The government must put more money into renewable energy if it is to stand any chance of meeting its target of getting 20 percent of its energy from those sources by 2020, industry associations said on Friday.

### Texas: [Environmentalists Want To Slow Push For Coal Plants](#)

Legislators returning to Austin next week will be met with a growing controversy. A plan by TXU to build up to 19 new coal-burning power plants across the state continues to stir up debate.

A coalition of environmental groups will ask legislators to stop the plan for these coal plants. They want more time to figure out the best way to handle the state's looming energy crisis.

### [Polar bears & business flares](#)

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (MarketWatch) -- Polar bears may be put on the endangered species list because of global warming. What else may become extinct? How about oil, water, trees, fish and food?

The way in which we buy and consume -- create our economy -- is going to have to change; we are running out of the resources to support it. And that means more ethical choices will have to be made with regard the products we buy and the companies in which we invest.

### [Oil Scene: The Year in Review](#)

Another interesting feature of the crude markets last year was continued robust global economic growth. However, this was not matched by corresponding growth in oil demand. Conservation finally seemed to be playing its role. A particularly mild winter, rising prices and the removal of subsidies in some developing countries, dampened oil demand growth, resulting in progressive downward revisions in demand forecasts as the year unfolded.

### [IEA's New Head Says He Will 'Avoid Confrontation,' Help OPEC](#)

The International Energy Agency will avoid confrontation with OPEC and help oil-rich nations cut dependence on earnings from crude, the agency's next executive director said.

"Confrontation won't resolve anything," said Nobuo Tanaka, 56, a former Japanese diplomat who has been chosen to replace Frenchman Claude Mandil in September 2007. "Dialogue will help the two sides get mutual benefits."

### [UK Oil Sector Had Bumper Year in 2006, Despite Pressure on Costs](#)

"We've never had it so good," was the refrain from Aberdeen's oil and gas sector when businesses reflected on 2006. Operators, service companies and industry employees all

enjoyed one of the busiest years the industry has seen.

### [Profit from alternative energy](#)

The world's economy can't afford to keep growing by using old fossil fuels and old ways of burning them for energy.

### [ComEd is behind 'consumer' warning](#)

The commercial, in a foreboding tone, suggests that the lights may go out in Illinois if an electricity rate freeze is extended.

"We don't need a California-style energy crisis in Illinois," cautions a voice representing Consumers Organized for Reliable Electricity.

It may sound like the campaign of a grass-roots consumer group, but it is not.

### [Poor face bigger disservice than higher taxes on autos](#)

Washington -- My liberal friends have asked me to consider the poor. Their request comes in response to my proposals for increased taxes on gasoline, a tax on engine horsepower, and higher fees on other automotive items and services that would make American consumers pay closer attention to the kinds of vehicles they are buying and the amount of energy they are using.

...To paraphrase my late father: Use your brains. The nation that is ignoring the poor now, when there is fuel to be had, will be even less inclined to pay attention to them if there is too little fuel available for everybody's transportation and life-support needs.

### [Wisconsin poised for new growth in biodiesel fuel](#)

GREEN BAY — Municipal vehicles in Barron County in northern Wisconsin use 10,000 gallons of fuel a week, much of it diesel oil for dump trucks, snowplows and machinery.

Until recently, all money spent on fuel left the area. But the county recently switched 10 percent of its fleet to run on biodiesel fuel, which is produced from renewable crops by local farmers.

### [Norway 2007 Oil Output to Drop 5.6 Percent, Directorate Says](#)

Norway's oil output will drop by about 5.6 percent this year as companies such as Statoil

ASA and Norsk Hydro ASA struggle to make up for dwindling North Sea output, the nation's petroleum directorate said.

### [Democrats Hope to Take From Oil, Give To Green Energy](#)

WASHINGTON - House Democrats are crafting an energy package that would roll back billions of dollars worth of oil drilling incentives, raise billions more by boosting federal royalties paid by oil and gas companies for offshore production, and plow the money into new tax breaks for renewable energy sources, congressional sources said yesterday.

Not surprisingly, the API isn't pleased: [Oil Group Blasts US Democrats' Tax Agenda](#)

U.S. House Democrats' plan to snatch back billions of dollars worth of tax incentives from Big Oil will reduce domestic production and make the nation more dependent on foreign oil, industry officials say.

### [Crude settles at lowest level since 2005](#)

NEW YORK - Oil prices shed more than \$2 Thursday to settle at their lowest level since June 2005, after the U.S. government reported higher-than-expected inventories of gasoline, heating oil and diesel fuel amid warm winter temperatures.

### [EU to call for a 'new industrial revolution'](#)

BRUSSELS - The European Commission will call next week for "a new industrial revolution" in the energy sector to boost competition, protect the climate and ensure security of supply, a draft paper from the EU executive showed.

### [Pearson accuses airlines of failing to take climate change seriously](#)

LONDON - Environment minister Ian Pearson has accused British, Irish and US airlines of failing to take global warming seriously, branding Ryanair "the irresponsible face of capitalism".

### [Nuclear agency head dismissed for lapses](#)

WASHINGTON - Tens of millions of dollars and repeated security reviews haven't stopped embarrassing security breakdowns in the government's nuclear weapons program — and now the man in charge has been sent packing.

Samuel Bodman on Thursday ousted the head of the National Nuclear Security

Administration, which maintains the nuclear weapons stockpile and oversees the nation's weapons research laboratories.

"I have decided it is time for new leadership at the NNSA," Bodman said in announcing that the agency's chief, Linton Brooks, would resign within the month.

### [India leftists to campaign against U.S. nuclear deal](#)

NEW DELHI - India's main communist party, which shores up the federal coalition, said on Thursday it would launch a campaign against a controversial nuclear deal with the United States, saying it was not in the country's interests.

### [Zimbabwe: ZESA Workers Strike, Cut Off Power Supplies](#)

ZESA Holdings workers yesterday downed tools demanding a salary increase of more than 1 000 percent and expressed their anger by disconnecting consumers in the central business district, mostly shops and takeaways.

The workers reported for duty yesterday but did not work arguing that the 144 percent increment offered by management was "too little".

### [Peak oil isn't bad for everyone](#)

While some energy companies are worried about dwindling reserves, Schlumberger Ltd (NYSE: SLB) stands to gain enormously as oil and gas become harder to find.

### [Political Peak Oil](#)

One thing stands in the way of secure and abundant supplies of oil: Government.

### [Collapse of civilisations linked to climate change](#)

The downfall of the one of the greatest Chinese dynasties may have been catalysed by severe changes in climate. The same climate changes may have simultaneously led to the end of the Maya civilisation depicted in Mel Gibson's new film Apocalypto.



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