



The Bullroarer - Saturday 16 February 2008

Posted by [Big Gav](#) on February 15, 2008 - 10:55pm in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

John Quiggin - [One percenters underbid by McKinsey](#)

I've put up quite a few posts supporting the conclusion of the Stern review that large cuts in CO₂ emissions could be achieved at very modest economic cost. Mostly, the analysis has focused on policies aimed at reducing developed country emissions by 30 per cent by 2020 and 60 per cent by 2050, and the typical conclusion is that the cost would be around 1 per cent of national income. For Australia, at current income levels that would be about \$10 billion per year. Today's news reports a study by McKinsey estimating a much smaller cost, around \$3 billion per year. I haven't seen the report yet but a quick Google found a similar study for the US.

I suspect the report is over-optimistic in the sense that it estimates the cost of doing the job in the most technically efficient fashion, whereas any feasible policy to induce adoption of the necessary measures will have higher costs. But it's easy to show that the order of magnitude estimate must be approximately right. You can see this by looking at an absolute upper bound assuming we just replace all energy generation by expensive but feasible sources like solar (given the costs of generation, the extra cost required for large grids and pumped storage to smooth out supply variability is a rounding error here). That cost is no more than 10 per cent of income. Taking account of the obvious adjustment responses such as reduced consumption in response to higher energy prices implies an even tighter bound, maybe 5 per cent of income.

The most important criticism to be made here is that it is increasingly evident that a 60 per cent reduction in emissions by 2050 may well not be enough.

SMH - [Going green for cost of a phone call](#)

SMH - [This way, please, to the sardine squeeze](#)

THIS is the future of train travel in Sydney - a system becoming so crowded that RailCorp is trialling the use of marshals on platforms at Town Hall, Wynyard and Central stations to get people on and off trains faster. The troubled rail system had to squeeze in more than 200,000 extra passengers a week last year - a sign of the congestion at the root of the city's transport chaos.

The director-general of the Ministry of Transport, Jim Glasson, said yesterday that a surge in demand for public transport last year was the core of the problem. "In the last

year overall patronage on rail has gone up by 3.7 per cent," he said yesterday. "That is close to 200,000 additional passenger journeys a week, or over 10 million over a 12-month period, [and] that is substantial. Congestion is at the core of the transport challenge right now ... "Similarly on bus networks we've got bus corridors now running at growth rates of 20 per cent compound."



ABC - [Petrol tax cuts the road to ruin](#)

Press.co.nz - [Low lakes pose risk of power cuts](#)

The security of the electricity supply is on a knife-edge and power cuts are possible this winter. Energy Minister David Parker yesterday admitted the supply situation was becoming dire, although he still believed the country would get through winter without blackouts. Earlier yesterday, however, Meridian Energy chief executive Keith Turner told a select committee at Parliament that New Zealand would avoid cold showers and brown-outs only if nothing else went wrong. "It is a very fine margin, finer than I have seen it in my career," Turner said. He has spent the past 39 years in the electricity industry. "There is no question that New Zealand ... has under-invested in the (electricity) grid for 20 years," he said.

NZ Herald - [Garth George: People in power need to address supply problems](#)

Stuff.co.nz - [Power station to stay shut despite fears of blackouts](#)

Not even the threat of impending power cuts this winter will bring New Plymouth's power station back into service. Contact Energy yesterday told the Taranaki Daily News there was no suggestion they would consider re-opening the power station, despite the looming prospect of power shortages in New Zealand. The New Plymouth station was closed last year following the discovery of asbestos in pipe lagging. On Thursday, Energy Minister David Parker said the country's electricity supply situation was becoming dire.

ABC - [Drought killing wildlife: 'never dry as this'](#)

Years of very low rainfall in the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia are being blamed for the death of wildlife and hundreds of trees. Experts say river red gums can live for 1,000 years in dry conditions. But Phil Barron, from Greening Australia, says hundreds of the mighty trees in the Flinders are dead or dying.

Public Opinion - [The Australian: water politics](#)

Water politics brings out some strange views doesn't it? Here is an editorial in The Australian: ... "Politicians like to hide behind climate change, but the root cause of the water crisis in Australian cities has been the failure of successive governments to build dams" ...

How this applies to southern Australia is beyond me. There have been no rains and the dams in the Murray Darling Basin are at very low levels. On the Australian's account the lack of water in southern Australia has little to do with rain or the over-allocation of the water that is available to subsidize irrigated agriculture.

This little snippet indicates that The Australian, in continuing to advocate conservative politics will run with the most dubious views---politicians hide behind climate change (a smokescreen) to cover their inaction over building more dams. Dam-building is what is needed to drought proof the country. It sounds like the 1950s voice of the irrigated agriculture doesn't it; one that has updated itself to speak as a climate change denialist.

The Age - [Global warming could invite sharks to Antarctica: biologists](#)

Brisbane Times - [Mass evacuation from Mackay](#)

STCW - [15 February 2008 Newsletter](#)

Michael Lardelli (Online Opinion) - [To save the world we may have to waste it](#)

"The only thing worse than peak oil now is peak oil in 20 years time."

I first heard this comment in 2004 not long after finding out about the imminent peak in the world's oil production rate ("peak oil"). Now in 2008 it seems we passed the peak of conventionally-mined oil more than a year ago. When I start to feel depressed about the implications of the decline in world oil production this comment helps me to deal with it. Let me explain:

Nothing happens without energy and oil is the master facilitating resource of our civilisation. Oil provides the majority of the world's energy, and almost all of its transport energy - in a highly concentrated form that is easy to store and carry. It is also the source of plastics that are part of almost every aspect of modern life.

With oil driving the Green Revolution we have increased our population to nearly seven billion and our current consumption patterns are destroying the world's ecosystems - our life support mechanism.

The ecological foot print of the human race is currently 1.25 planet Earths and rising.

The abundant energy of oil allows us to exceed the sustainable carrying capacity of our world for a short period but with irreparable environmental consequences. The longer we continue on this path the more damage we do and the more severe the ultimate ecological penalty to be payed.

Peak Energy - [Peak Oil - A "Class Zero" Catastrophe ?](#)

SMH - [Fears that NSW electricity deal may fizzle](#)

The Age - [Long and winding road nearly ready to roll](#)

The Age - [AGL sees light in sector power play](#)

Asia Business News - [KUTh Energy Initiates Network Connection Strategy](#)

Peak Energy - [Agri Energy: Another One Bites The Dust](#)

Peak Energy - [Vietnam May Phase Out Coal Exports](#)

Peak Energy - [Massive Oil And Gas Find Off Aceh ?](#)

Peak Energy - [Farming carbon as a cash crop](#)



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