



The Bullroarer - Monday 28 April 2008

Posted by [Big Gav](#) on April 28, 2008 - 8:30am in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

STCWA - [Newsletter 28 April 2008](#)

With oil at US\$120 a barrel, and petrol over \$1.60 in the eastern suburbs of Perth there hasn't been a sound from the State government, but the Federal Minister, Martin Ferguson, has started wishing for large new oil fields to be found. We wish him well in his religious fervour, but would hope he would tell the Australian public that any oil fields that are found will take 8-10 years to come into operation. So won't help Australia survive a current account crisis well before the next federal election. Best to get us into smaller cars and more public transport as quickly as possible, IMHO.

SMH - [Government urged to cut fossil fuel subsidies](#)

The Federal Government is being urged to scrap billions of dollars in subsidies to the fossil fuel industry ahead of likely cuts to education and health in next month's budget. ... community advocacy group GetUp says the Government should first consider cutting billions of dollars worth of subsidies to the fossil fuel industry. The subsidies, which GetUp says amount to about \$4 billion, include \$1.1 billion in fringe benefit tax concessions for company cars, \$800 million in concessions for the aviation industry and \$600 million for the automotive industry.

"The \$4 billion in subsidies to the fossil fuel industry - they are wasteful and inappropriate in the context of the climate crisis that we're facing," GetUp executive director Greg Solomon said. "Hidden within the budget are these anachronistic subsidies for the fossil fuel industry and they should be redirected, partly to investment in renewable energy."

The Age - [Economy shifts into low gear](#)

Shane Oliver estimates that compared to a year ago, the typical Australian household is now spending an extra \$700 on petrol. Despite some expectations of slightly lower demand due to slowing global growth, most analysts say the oil price will not fall any time soon. ANZ chief economist Saul Eslake says he does not subscribe to the "peak oil" theory but is concerned that supply is not keeping up with demand, meaning prices will remain high and could even go higher.

SMH - [Cars now no more efficient than '60s](#)

CARS are no more fuel-efficient today than they were in the 1960s, a transport expert says. In research for the Garnaut climate change review, Paul Mees, of Melbourne University, has used Bureau of Statistics figures to show fuel efficiency has remained practically unchanged since 1963. The average Australian car then used 11.4 litres of petrol to travel 100 kilometres. In 2006, the bureau's Survey of Motor Vehicle Use shows, it was unchanged.

NZ Herald - [Mike Moore: Nothing more vital than world's food](#)

Futurists have been predicting for some years that global warming and competition for resources pose real problems in terms of political stability, even security. A tsunami of economic migrants leaving failed states is a possibility. Migrants represent in total about the tenth largest state now. Typically they flee hardship and seek better opportunities, this is always so.

What has been the most successful 50 years of alleviating poverty in human history is threatened. What's happening, what's new? Nothing is more important than food. In 12 months, corn and rice prices have doubled, wheat price tripled, soy beans up by 87 per cent, and global food reserves are at their lowest levels ever.

The Australian - [Oil aplenty, but investment needed](#)

Oil prices have risen within a whisker of \$US120 (\$128) a barrel, which is a 20 per cent increase in the past three weeks. It is a 40 per cent increase since the beginning of the year and double the level of a year ago, although \$US60 a barrel was seen then as a shocking development. The price being mumbled in the marketplace now is \$US200, although no one is saying when. At a gathering of oil and energy ministers from around the world in Rome last weekend, Saudi oil minister Ali Naimi shocked delegates by departing from the long-standing OPEC script, which blamed treacherous Western speculators for spiralling prices and admitted under-investment was the cause. The world, he said, had abundant oil reserves - sufficient to last 50 years and beyond.

Stuff.co.nz - ['Serious' risk to winter power](#)

New Zealand's biggest electricity users are calling on the Government to show leadership now and start saving power to avoid winter blackouts. Members of the Major Electricity Users Group (MEUG) held an emergency telephone meeting on Thursday to discuss falling water levels in the South Island hydro-electricity lakes and the continuing high spot prices.

MEUG members include Comalco New Zealand, which runs the Tiwai Point aluminium smelter and is the country's largest consumer of electricity, Norske Skog, Carter Holt Harvey, New Zealand Steel and Pan Pac Forest Products. Executive director Ralph Matthes said the consensus was that the threat of a winter power crisis was now

"reasonably serious".

NZ Herald - [Storm, possible tornadoes, set to lash New Zealand](#)

The Radio Network's head weather analyst Philip Duncan said a huge band of thunderstorms in the Tasman Sea stretches well over 1100km. He said: "While they are often much bigger out at sea, it does show that this storm is packed with energy."

Mr Duncan believes there is a risk of tornadoes in western areas of the North Island as well as across the South Island's west coast. "This is a weather event that all New Zealanders should pay close attention to," he said. "Take heed of the warnings and keep up to date with the latest thunderstorm warnings." He said the heavy rain was expected to dump around 50mm of rain across the previously drought-hit Waikato.

NZ Herald - [Electricity through wave power](#)

A prototype of what is likely to be the first turbine for tapping the tidal energy of New Zealand waters is sailing around Scottish seas bolted to a ship. Christchurch company Neptune Power wants to begin installing an experimental turbine in Cook Strait next summer, based on the design being tested off Scotland. Neptune received resource consent from the Greater Wellington Regional Council this month for a trial that can last up to 10 years.

Stuff.co.nz - [Stewart Is may lead NZ in green power](#)

The potential for Stewart Island to lead the way in renewable electricity generation is bright, according to Meridian subsidiary companies Right House and Elemental Energy. The Stewart Island Community Board last week agreed to trial two 2kW photovoltaics (solar panels) and a 1.8kW wind turbine on the island.

SMH - [Fuel blamed for Qantas fare rise](#)

Qantas will raise domestic and international airfares by as much as 3.5 per cent early next month to offset the soaring cost of jet fuel prices. The decision comes as the price of oil today hit a record of \$US119.93 a barrel due to a strike closing a major pipeline in Britain and renewed violence in resource-rich Nigeria.

The Australian - [Snooty prices for sootiest commodity](#)

THERE aren't many cheap entries into the coal sector remaining. The big producers are trading on pretty hefty valuations, which is not surprising given what is happening to prices and demand. Just as copper theft around the world has been a sign of the value of that metal, coal smuggling from Vietnam to China is now big business and one involving

criminal gangs, showing just how scarce the commodity is becoming. The Vietnamese are concerned because they want to conserve resources as they build new coal-fired power plants.

The Australian - [Gloucester Coal shares soar on outlook](#)

The Australian - [APAC in IPO for coal mine](#)

The Australian - [Sinopec cleared to control AED fields](#)

TV3 (NZ) - [Trelise Cooper launches New Zealand's first designer eco-bag](#)

Every year New Zealanders use more than a billion plastic bags. The petroleum based bags are not biodegradable and use large amounts of energy and fossil fuels to produce. Designer shopping bags have gathered somewhat of a cult status overseas. In Britain Anya Hindmarch's "I'm not a plastic bag" has become this year's must-have fashion accessory.

SMH - [Extreme weather is here to stay](#)

SOMETHING strange is happening to our weather. Sydney has endured the most sodden school holidays in living memory, including the longest unbroken spell of April drizzle for 77 years, a month after some state capitals sweated through the worst continuous period of baking heat ever recorded. And unseasonably early snow fell in the mountains at the weekend.

"The weather's been anything but normal over the last six months," said Dave Williams, a senior forecaster at the Bureau of Meteorology. "I've been in this game for 20 years, and I can't recall a longer period of sustained weather patterns, of various kinds."



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