



The Bullroarer - Monday 5 May 2008

Posted by [Big Gav](#) on May 5, 2008 - 8:01am in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

Stuff.co.nz - [Kiwis struggle to pay power bills](#)

New analysis shows almost half a million people in New Zealand's four biggest centres are struggling to keep warm in winter. The figures were revealed as the first cold snap of the year brought snow to Southland, Otago, Canterbury and the Tararua and Rimutaka ranges yesterday and as people were advised to conserve power and stock up on candles as the first serious warnings of power blackouts emerged. Two North Island lines companies yesterday said power could be cut off without warning, for at least half an hour, in response to lower than average hydro lake levels.

The Australian - [Woodside floating LNG plan](#)

DON Voelte at the Woodside AGM in Perth last week again flagged that floating LNG might be the best option for developing the Greater Sunrise reservoirs in the Timor Sea. Greater Sunrise is once more being touted as a development project after several years where the political situation in East Timor has limited Woodside, the project operator, in translating its enthusiasm into a commercial outcome. Floating LNG is an intriguing prospect.

frogblog - [500 Scientists with Documented Doubts - about the Heartland Institute ?](#)

DeSmogBlog has published a rapidly growing list of outraged climate scientists - all of whom were listed on the Heartland Institute's "500 Scientists with Documented Doubts" statement after the climate change deniers conference in New York last March. Here are just three of the quotes on offer ...

SMH - [No sign of drought ending, warns bureau](#)

Despite recent rain in some areas, the drought has not come to an end - and it will take years of above-average rainfall to return the country to normality. The big dry has become worse in central Australia and is stubbornly persisting across much of the country, the Bureau of Meteorology says.

Climate change was partly to blame, the bureau said in its latest monthly drought statement. "The combination of record heat and widespread drought during the past five to 10 years over large parts of southern and eastern Australia is without historical precedent and is, at least partly, a result of climate change," the statement said.

The southern part of the Northern Territory, parts of far western Queensland, and areas around Marree in South Australia were suffering from serious rainfall deficiencies.

SMH - [Qld geothermal exploration permit issued](#)

The Queensland government has issued its first exploration permit for geothermal energy. Mines and Energy Minister Geoff Wilson has announced NSW company Granite Power Ltd has been granted a permit to carry out the preliminary work needed to begin using the emerging energy source.

Two other companies, Kuth Exploration Pty Ltd and Clean Energy Australasia Pty Ltd, are in the final stages of having exploration permits granted, Mr Wilson said. There are nine sites across Queensland earmarked for exploration.

The Australian - [The shocking truth about electricity](#)

The first assets on the block are likely to be the retail arm of EnergyAustralia and possibly the 4700MW Macquarie Generation, or the 4200MW Delta Electricity.

AGL Energy is believed to be keen on any assets being sold. Its boss Michael Fraser is raising cash through selling an estimated \$2 billion worth of assets, including its 25 per cent shareholding in the listed Queensland Gas Company, its stake in the Enertrade pipeline (along with its interests in the PNG LNG Project), a stake in Elgas, a stake in Chilean gas network Gas Valpo, and its interest in Victoria's Loy Yang A power station.

But there is no certainty one of the country's biggest energy operators, Origin Energy, will take part, now that Britain's BG Group has bid for it. BG is more interested in coal-seam methane and LNG in Queensland.

NZ Herald - [Spot the real strategic asset](#)

BG Groups's \$15.8 billion takeover bid for the parent of Contact Energy throws open the question of whether the Labour-led Government will try to bring New Zealand's only listed power generator back under state ownership. As the country hunkers down to face another cold winter made more difficult by the prospect of electricity blackouts, it's a fair bet the Beehive's occupants will again be wondering whether this is the opportune time to get Contact Energy firmly back under state control by buying it from BG Group in a post-takeover mop-up.

The Australian - [Fertiliser fills larder in food crisis](#)

BACK in December, somewhat ahead of the rest of the crowd, we started to talk about investing in fertiliser components -- potash and phosphate -- as the world needs more and more food.

SMH - [Toll sells NZ rail and ferry operations](#)

Freight transport firm Toll Holdings Ltd sold its New Zealand rail and ferry operations to the country's government for \$NZ665 million (\$A555.35 million) to focus on its goods forwarding business. "The disposal of the rail and ferry operations to the New Zealand government will give rail in New Zealand the opportunity to move forward in an environment with greater clarity and ability to better plan its development," Toll managing director Paul Little said in a statement on Monday. "We support the government's objective of boosting capital spending on rail."

SMH - [Inflation gauge hits a record](#)

Inflation is growing at its fastest rate on record as petrol prices reach new heights, a leading private sector indicator shows. Economists say an interest rate cut by Christmas is now looking less likely, as price pressures persist.

SMH - [Climate change could end boom times - Garnaut](#)

Global warming could have the same economic effect as the Great Depression if handled poorly, government climate change adviser Ross Garnaut says. Professor Garnaut has written an article saying that poor design or slowness in implementing climate change-easing policies could spell the end of what he calls the Platinum Age.

The economist's article, published in the Australian National University's biannual Asian-Pacific Economic Literature, says the shock of unexpectedly large climate change impacts on fragile political systems could bring about sharp downturns in economies.



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