



The Bullroarer - Tuesday 15 July 2008

Posted by [Big Gav](#) on July 15, 2008 - 7:27am in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

The Age - [The great biofuels con](#)

Growing crops for oil was supposed to solve global warming. Now, as food prices soar, biofuels stand condemned as a crime against humanity. Rarely in political history can there have been such a rapid and dramatic reversal of a received wisdom as we have seen in the past 18 months over biofuels - the cropping of living plants, such as soybeans, wheat and sugar cane, to generate energy.

Two years ago biofuels were still being hailed as a dream solution to what was seen as one of the most urgent problems confronting mankind - our dependence on fossil fuels, which are not only finite but seemed to be threatening the world with the catastrophe of global warming.

frogblog - [Electrifying the Rails - a Peak Oil Silver BB?](#)

Everyone agrees that there is no single technology, no single silver bullet to solve the challenges we face because of peak oil. However, across the bigger ditch in the US, a very relevant debate is brewing about a key technology plank in the response to peak oil - electrified rail. This topic is particularly pertinent as New Zealand gets ready to reinvigorate its own rail network after decades of neglect during our love affair with the black gold. ...

I think that KiwiRail should be seriously considering finishing the electrification of the Auckland to Wellington Line, which is currently over 1/3 electrified already, with plans and budgets to complete the Auckland end using the same specifications. We already have a plausible target of 90% renewables by 2025, way ahead of any American plan. Let's get cracking on this no-brainer of a solution before the cost of oil goes sky high and the capital cost goes up with it!

Peak Energy - [By Foot And By Rail](#)

The Age - ['Dirty' fuel firms split clean energy group](#)

A DAMAGING rift has split Australia's top renewable energy group following an effective takeover of the organisation by fossil fuel companies. At a time when more

renewable energy is needed to replace polluting forms of electricity, the Clean Energy Council has been hit with accusations that it is run for the interests of "dirty fuel" companies, including the operators of three of Victoria's brown-coal power stations. ...

The council formed last year after politicians complained it was difficult to deal with the three groups then representing the renewable sector, but the split has become so bitter there are doubts it can effectively lobby for clean energy. Some members expressed dismay to The Sunday Age that Tasmanian timber giant Gunns was recently approved as a Clean Energy Council member for its proposed wood-burning plant. The bioenergy plant, part of the company's planned pulp mill, will burn waste from native forests and plantations to produce electricity.

"The way it's going we'll have nuclear energy on the council soon," said Rodger Meads, the Australian head of international solar power company Conergy, which pays \$25,000 for council membership.

Clean Energy Council - [Clean Energy Council says follow the leader - Canberrans paid top dollar for producing clean energy](#)

As of 2 July 2008, ACT homes and businesses with small, grid-connected systems, such as solar photovoltaic (PV) panels or micro wind turbines, will be paid top dollar for all the energy they produce. This is known as a gross feed-in tariff. The ACT's gross feed-in tariff is set at more than three times the current cost of electricity and will lead to increased take-up of renewable energy throughout the territory.

"Canberra is certainly leading the way but we already have three different feed-in tariff schemes in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. A national approach would be a better solution."

Upstream Online - [Bechtel wins Gladstone LNG work](#)

Queensland Gas Company (QGC) and UK-based BG Group have picked engineering contractor Bechtel to build the proposed Gladstone liquefied natural gas project in Queensland.

Upstream Online - [New oil shale deposit in South Australia](#)

Perth-based explorer Tasman Resources is set to undertake further analysis of an oil shale prospect in the remote deserts of South Australia that mirrors deposits such as Nunavut in Canada. The Australian outfit said that it had identified the potential for a deposit of shale oil while drilling for coal and other minerals at its Garford project, 80 kilometres south-west of Coober Pedy.

Stuff.co.nz - [Funding boost for waste gas biofuel project](#)

Plans for a new biofuel made from waste gas belching out of industrial chimneys have

received a \$12 million boost from the Government. Its developers hope the new fuel will slash the country's petrol consumption by 90 per cent.

The project is one of 96 to get a share of \$785 million over five years from the funding agency Foundation for Research, Science and Technology. LanzaTech, the Auckland company developing the biofuel, has already attracted heavyweight backing from Sun Microsystems co-founder Vinod Khosla.

The Australian - [New Pilbara power station planned by Rio](#). Better hope Varanus island doesn't blow up again...

RIO Tinto plans to invest more than \$US500 million on upgrading its power sources in the Pilbara to support its iron ore operations. The mining giant will build generation and transmission infrastructure near Karratha, in Western Australia, worth \$US503 million (\$515.9 million) to supply electricity to its port and mine operations. The new power station will be constructed adjacent to the 7 Mile Rail Operations site. It will use natural gas turbines, resulting in a reduction in greenhouse gas emission rates.

The Age - [Melbourne's trams are a hostile place](#)

This is a city that fines visitors who don't know how to buy tickets. APPARENTLY, it makes economic sense to bring back tram conductors to Melbourne's trams. Excuse my bluntness, but der, Fred. And, ah, what about all the other factors that make something a good idea? Such as safety, functionality, enjoyment?

The Age - [New rail tunnel may be privatised](#)

A PROPOSED \$7 billion rail tunnel from Footscray to Caulfield could be privatised under funding options being considered by the Brumby Government and being backed by Metlink, the body that promotes Melbourne's public transport operations. The Government has also refused to rule out fare increases to help pay for the tunnel.

NZ Herald - [Hydro generation rises](#)

Stuff.co.nz - [Electricity industry relaxes](#)

The nationwide winter power crisis is drawing to a close, but the industry says the South Island is not out of trouble yet. Despite low southern hydro lakes, South Island spot prices yesterday fell to their lowest levels in nearly six months, the strongest hint yet that electricity suppliers believe the shortage may be over.

The Australian - [Restricted access delivers lower uranium output: ERA](#)

ENERGY Resources of Australia delivered a 31 per cent drop in uranium output for the quarter after restricted access to the open pit.

Crikey - [Crikey's green paper: these are the climate options](#)

So what are the criteria for an effective carbon abatement framework?

- * It creates genuine incentives for carbon abatement across the economy i.e. it works.
- * It avoids administrative complexity and compliance burdens. Businesses and governments have to be able to make it work, without devoting huge amounts of resources to it.
- * It is complementary to likely international carbon abatement measures. There's lots of scepticism about the likelihood of an international agreement on climate change, but that's even more reason to look for a framework that is more likely to be accepted internationally.
- * It minimises the burden on low-income households.
- * It encourages technological innovation, because technology may be able to make it easier and less expensive to reduce our carbon emission (we'll discuss these two points more tomorrow when we look at the issue of compensation).

Let's go through the different types of proposals and see how they stack up.

The Australian - [Govt considers Australia's first new coal port in 25 years](#). Because you can never burn too much coal.

AUSTRALIA'S first new coal port in 25 years could be built in Queensland, to boost the state's coal exports by 40 per cent. Premier Anna Bligh today announced a "trifecta" of proposals for the Bowen, Galilee and Surat coal basins, during a budget estimates committee hearing. Ms Bligh said the government was considering a \$5.3 billion proposal by Waratah Coal, including a new mine near Alpha.

The Galilee Coal project would produce 25 million tonnes of thermal coal a year for export. A new coal port would be built near Shoalwater Bay, between Rockhampton and Mackay, with a 100 million tonne a year capacity.

The Australian - [Climate protesters shut down coal port](#)

POLICE arrested 37 activists who chained themselves to a train and rail tracks at Newcastle Port yesterday, shutting down the world's largest coal port for seven hours. Protest organisers said up to 1000 people marched to the Carrington coal terminal to demonstrate against government inaction on climate change. About 100 people scaled or cut through fences to enter the rail corridor and tie themselves to a fully loaded coal train.

Stuff.co.nz - [Food prices at 18-year high](#)

Soaring food and petrol prices pushed annual inflation up to 4 percent in the June year after the Consumer Price Index (CPI) leapt a higher than expected 1.6 percent in the June quarter, Statistics New Zealand said today. The department reported food prices rose 8.2 percent in the June year – the highest rise in the Food Price Index (FPI) for 18 years.

frogblog - [Imagine there's no...](#)

Worldchanging has put on its best John Lennon glasses and written a post about a hopeful new post-green future ...

It then invites readers to contribute to its vision for a better world by imagining all the things we won't need anymore once we sort our problems. It starts the ball rolling by telling us about a world without rubbish bins, toxic warning labels, power bills or smokestacks. Sun heated and insulated homes replace air conditioners, compact urban neighbourhoods replace dangerous footpaths, and public transport replaces sprawl.

Peak Energy - [Colourful Concentrators: Organic Solar](#)

Peak Energy - [Wave power in China](#)

Peak Energy - [Boogie Power And Victoria's Circuit](#)

A Few Things Ill Considered - [Another Week of Global Warming News, July 13, 2008](#). More links than any human being can read in a day.

Peak Energy - [Short Takes](#). Even more links.



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