



Leave Oil Before It Leaves Us

That's a direct quote from Fatih Birol, Chief Economist and Head of the Economic Analysis Division of the Paris-based International Energy Agency, from an interview on May 2nd of this year. You can read the entire interview here -

http://www.relocalize.net/fatih_birol_interview_leave_oil_before_it_leaves_us

The International Energy Agency (IEA), an assemblage of experts from 27 countries, was formed after the 1973 oil embargo. The byline on their website reads "Energy Security, Growth and Sustainability through Co-operation and Outreach". On the "About Us" page on their web site the first sentence reads "The International Energy Agency (IEA) acts as energy policy advisor to 27 member countries in their effort to ensure reliable, affordable and clean energy for their citizens." IEA member countries include the United States, the U.K., Canada, Japan, Australia – the list goes on. The "About us" page goes on to say "With a staff of around 190, mainly energy experts and statisticians from its 27 member countries, the IEA conducts a broad programme of energy research, data compilation, publications and public dissemination of the latest energy policy analysis and recommendations on good practices."

What makes Fatih Birol's recent interview turn heads is the fact that, for years, the IEA's been saying "hey, no problem, as global demand for oil grows, supply won't have any problem keeping up." But last month he was quoted as saying that the combination of soaring demand and limited supply prospects were creating "ground for speculation". Personally, I think the world deserved a "heads up" a little sooner.....say about 10 or 20 years ago? There has been no lack of concern and evidence upon which that concern was based!

This news could be a bit disturbing, I know, and the more you read about the ramifications the more disturbing it becomes. The web site www.EnergyBulletin.net has news updates on energy issues from around the world on a daily basis. But the good news is that solutions abound, most of them are available today, and they will ultimately improve your household's economic picture – peak oil or not! Here in Nevada County we're blessed with a growing number of solution-oriented groups and activities in this regard.

We have a local group that goes by the acronym "APPLE", which stands for the Alliance for a Post Petroleum Local Economy. APPLE is "a local, nonpartisan citizen forum to develop practical solutions for the challenges ahead." They've been working very hard to draw attention to the issue of peak oil for the past three years, well in advance of the IEA and well in advance of rapidly escalating oil prices. A number of other groups have sprung from APPLE's roots, such as the Clean Power Co-Op of Nevada County, Peak Moment Television and PowerUp-NC. For more information or to get involved with APPLE see their web site at <http://www.apple-nc.org>.

Another forum recently created is the Sustainable Living blog on The Union's web site. Go to www.TheUnion.com and click on "Opinions" then "Blogs". In addition to this column every Saturday, I spend what little additional spare time I have contributing whatever I can to APPLE, The Union's new blog, and various public speaking opportunities. If you'd like to be better informed and prepared for whatever the future may hold, please join with others from your community and support these forums.

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