

# Peak Oil Issues

## Mitigation

You can mitigate the effects of the end of cheap oil on you and your family by undertaking a thorough review of how you live your life.

With the supply of oil to decrease year-on-year in the near future, most people throughout the world will be forced to change the way that they live their lives. The extent of adaptation required will be proportional to the intensity of current use, with those in developed industrial economies having much more change to accommodate than those in developing countries. The pressure for mitigation will come from two directions: voluntary and enforced. It will work at a variety of levels, from personal to community, and from national to international.

Various means of controlled energy descent, all requiring timely, educated leadership from all forms of government exist. These include The Uppsala or Rimini Protocols and Tradable Energy Quotas. These ideas for the slow contraction of oil supply rely primarily on international agreements between governments, and amount to rationing.

Other options include the implementation of the highest standards for efficiency of oil and gas use in home and industry, finding ways to reduce the amount of transportation needed for trade, work, leisure etc., and simply being truthful about the situation. Given the current economic paradigm of continual growth, these options are unlikely to be instigated in sufficient time to be of significant use. The onus therefore falls on the individual and communities to take appropriate steps to minimise hardship and dislocation in the future.

The easiest choice to make will be to do nothing and react as economic conditions change, prices rise and certain goods become scarce or completely unavailable. No-one knows exactly how or when these changes will occur but the rise in the price of oil from \$20 per barrel to \$70 - and higher - in the past couple of years is already pointing to what lies ahead: airlines are introducing fuel surcharges, new car buyers are switching to low fuel consumption models, and companies are seeing profits squeezed and are laying off employees.

You can mitigate Peak Oil's effects on you and your family by undertaking a thorough review of how you live your life. How do you travel and how often? Do you eat fresh seasonal local produce or pre-prepared, highly processed food? Is your entertainment heavily reliant on oil or gas? If you are starting a family, think carefully about how many children you will be able to afford. The same goes for pets. Consider career decisions for yourself and family - what future has that chosen industry got? Will your choice of house make it easier or cheaper to take your children to school and get to work? Will it be close to amenities and well insulated?

There is no need to panic. Many of the changes you decide to make are likely to save you money in the short term. Make sure your decisions are considered and have the agreement of those close to you. Make small changes first, research and take a few months to assess your options. Engage friends, family, colleagues, organisations and all levels of government about this problem - the more that people aware of the problem, the greater our chances of mitigating the consequences are. This will absolutely affect everyone, and co-operation is our best hope minimising the impact of the decline of oil and gas.

Further Reading:

Powerdown by Richard Heinberg



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