

East Asia Science & Security Network Report, Jan. 4, 2007

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1. Japan Plutonium Reprocessing

Writing in the Japan Times, Nautilus Associate Tadahiro Katsuta argues that Japan should postpone full operation of the Rokkasho reprocessing plant until the current spent fuel storage facilities are full, which will take at least a decade.

[Postpone full operation of Rokkasho](#)

2. Japanese Nuclear Plans

At the Nautilus Asia Energy Security workshop held at Tsinghua University from Nov. 5-7, 2006, Tatsujiro Suzuki presented a summary of the policies and plans for future nuclear energy development and nuclear spent fuel management in Japan.

[Japan Nuclear Power](#)

3. U.S Nuclear Energy Expansion

The Chicago Tribune (Robert Manor, "Nuclear energy nearing revival," 12/4/06) reports that in response to global warming and rising energy demand, the U.S. nuclear industry is making plans for 30 new plants. But some critics, like the consumer watchdog group Public Citizen, argue that nuclear power is uneconomical without government subsidies.

[Nuclear Energy Nearing Revival](#)

4. Chinese Energy Supplies

Writing in Policy Innovation, Rachel Makabi ("China's Catch 22," 12/28/06) argues that, with growing demand for energy and refineries that can only process low-sulfur oil, China may have little choice over the short-term than continuing to import oil from countries with questionable human rights records.

[China's Catch 22](#)

5. Global Uranium Supplies

In an op-ed in the International Herald Tribune ("Ensuring global uranium supplies," 12/22/06) Debra Decker and Erwann Michel-Kerjan argue that involving the insurance and finance industries in a global scheme to ensure uranium supplies would make it more difficult for states to pursue nuclear weapons programs under the guise of peaceful enrichment.

[Ensuring global uranium supplies](#)

6. Fuel Cell Development

The Washington Post (Edward Cody, "For Eco-Entrepreneurs in China, No Simple Way to Grow a Business," Dec. 28, 2006) reports that Chinese entrepreneurs are looking at fuel cell vehicles in their bid to develop innovative products that could take China's economy beyond its current reliance on cheap labor.

[China Fuel Cell Vehicles](#)

Fuel Cells 2000 and the U.S. Dept. of Energy's Hydrogen Program have launched a new searchable database that documents fuel cell and hydrogen activity in the United States.

[New State Fuel Cell, Hydrogen Activity Database](#)

7. U.S. Climate Change Responses

Writing in Policy Innovations, Shiyang Li argues that, by refusing to sign global environmental treaties like the Kyoto Protocol, the United States is missing out on important business opportunities. The New York Times (Claudia H. Deutsch, "U.S. Companies Explore Ways to Profit From Trading Credits to Emit Carbon," Dec. 28, 2006) reports that, in anticipation of future carbon taxes, U.S. companies are exploring different methods for trading carbon credits.

[Environmental Treaties: Inconvenience or Opportunity](#)

[U.S. Companies Explore Ways to Profit from Trading Carbon Credits](#)

8. Wind Power Problems and Potential

The New York Times (Matthew L. Wald, "It's Free, Plentiful, and Fickle," 12/28/06) reports that, while wind power remains a hopeful source for renewable energy, its tendency to be most available during off-peak hours means that wind farms cannot currently displace thermal power plants. Experts are exploring new methods of energy storage to make wind power more economically viable.

[It's Free, Plentiful, and Fickle](#)

9. Potential Death Toll from Flu Pandemic

The Washington Post (David Brown, "World Death Toll Of a Flu Pandemic Would Be 62 Million,"

12/22/06) reported that a study in the medical journal "Lancet" found that a new influenza pandemic would cost 62 million lives, with 96% of deaths occurring in developing countries.

[World Bird Flu Death Toll](#)

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