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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FORTIS BANK NEDERLAND/VM Group: THE ENERGY MONTHLY**

As the price of crude oil hovers between short-term doubts over the nature of the economic recovery and long-term anxiety about sufficient supply, energy markets have rarely been in such flux. Refiners are facing their toughest commercial challenges for decades, while oil producers are scratching their heads over the implications of the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Governments in many advanced economies are facing the political nightmare of having to force severe austerity programmes on populations that have become accustomed to credit-supported comfort, and no where is this more true than of the UK, where the embryonic Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition faces challenges on many fronts, one of the most pressing being how to prevent a power-supply crunch enveloping the country over the next decade. Everyone agrees that urgent action is required – but the state’s coffers are bare and the private sector is unwilling to shoulder alone the massive investment burden required for new power generation plants. Nuclear power promises the possibility of increasing the UK’s electricity generation while simultaneously meeting ever-tougher emissions’ reductions targets – but nuclear power requires substantial investment. Can the UK avoid slipping into Third World power-supply status, where regular power cuts become a way of life? This topic forms the main feature of the June edition of the VM Group/Fortis Bank Nederland *Energy Monthly*.

The June issue of the *Energy Monthly*, published today, also carries our regular update on prices of all major energy products, snapshots of speculative investment movements, a concise summary of all major energy-related news, and an updated series of crude oil supply-demand data from the IEA, EIA and Opec.

The *Energy Monthly* is open-access, available directly from the VM Group at: [www.virtualmetals.co.uk](http://www.virtualmetals.co.uk)

If you have not received a copy of this report, or should you require further details or commentary, please contact:

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