

POLICY

Marine reserves

Australia's government has unveiled its final plans to create what will be the world's largest network of marine reserves, covering 3.1 million square kilometres of ocean along the nation's coasts. Researchers were worried by draft proposals last year (see *Nature* 480, 14–15; 2011), but the plans released on 14 June addressed their concerns by including small but significant extensions to the reserve boundaries, to increase protection to regions such as the Coral Sea. The government expects the reserves to become law at the end of this year, after a public consultation. See go.nature.com/vnq8fw for more.

US research thrift

Research universities in the United States need to become more efficient and more productive, a 14 June report from the US National Academies urges. The report, requested by Congress in 2009, recommends ten fixes to maintain quality, including improving cost-effectiveness by sharing expensive research equipment and facilities, and encouraging greater collaboration. Federal funding has flattened or declined, and state funding has dropped by 25% on average and up to 50% in some cases, the report notes. See go.nature.com/6ppdtj for more.

Fisheries reform

Europe's attempts to overhaul its much-criticized fisheries policy took a step forward at a meeting in Luxembourg on 12 June. Ministers on the council of the European Union agreed to a partial ban on the practice of throwing away unwanted by-catch, and pledged to return fish



CHINA/PHOTO/GETTY

China celebrates space-station success

In a milestone for China's space programme, three astronauts boarded the country's orbiting Tiangong 1 space module on 18 June. Their flight on the *Shenzhou 9* craft was the country's fourth manned space launch, but is the first of a series

of missions in efforts to build a manned space station, the Tiangong ('Heavenly Palace'), by 2020 (see *Nature* 473, 14–15; 2011). The mission carried China's first female astronaut, Liu Yang. See go.nature.com/f5qkka for more.

stocks to levels that produce the maximum sustainable yield by 2020. But critics said that these agreements were insufficient, effectively allowing Europe's fisheries to continue on their current unsustainable path. Any reforms still need to be negotiated with the European Parliament. See go.nature.com/tn8oea for more.

Ocean acidity

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), based in Vienna, is to create a centre to facilitate and communicate research into ocean acidification, it announced on 18 June. The centre, to be launched this summer at the IAEA's Environmental Laboratories in Monaco, is part of the agency's remit to support peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Tracing of the radioisotope calcium-45,

for example, allows sensitive measurements of calcium carbonate uptake in the skeletons of marine organisms, affected by acidifying oceans.

German excellence

Thirty-nine universities have each won a share of €2.4 billion (US\$3 billion) in the second round of Germany's Excellence Initiative — a competition among the country's institutions to win elite status and funding for specialized research clusters and graduate schools for 2012–17. The decisions, announced on 15 June, spread cash across 99 separate projects.

Biomedical careers

The US National Institutes of Health on 14 June received two key reports on how to improve prospects for young biomedical scientists. One suggests raising minimum

salaries for postdocs, among other recommendations, while the other addresses the plight of under-represented minorities in biomedical science. See page 304 for more.

Open access

A report commissioned by the UK government has laid out how the country should accelerate a shift to open-access publishing. The 19 June report, chaired by sociologist Janet Finch at the University of Manchester, UK, recommended that researchers should prepare to pay up front for the cost of publishing their research, a route known as gold open access. See page 302 for more.

Unethical research

A US court has dismissed a lawsuit by Guatemalan citizens against US officials over American researchers

who intentionally infected Guatemalans with sexually transmitted diseases in the 1940s (see *Nature* **482**, 148–152; 2012). A presidential bioethics commission has already issued a series of reports condemning the experiments, but on 13 June a judge ruled that the government was immune to prosecution in the case. Lawyers said they would appeal. See go.nature.com/1ffh6l for more.

PEOPLE

Mikovits theft case

Chronic-fatigue-syndrome researcher Judy Mikovits is no longer facing criminal charges for stealing lab notebooks, computers and other material from her former employer, the Whittemore Peterson Institute for Neuro-Immune Disease in Reno, Nevada. A Nevada district attorney dropped the charges last week, although Mikovits (known for her now-retracted work linking chronic fatigue syndrome to a virus) still faces a civil suit from the institute. See go.nature.com/ukgeqy for more.

Nobel chemist dies

Organic chemist William Knowles (pictured), who shared the 2001 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, died on 13 June aged 95. Knowles worked for four decades at the agricultural



giant Monsanto in St Louis. He won the Nobel with Ryoji Noyori and Barry Sharpless for his work on chemical syntheses that selectively create one of two mirror-image forms (enantiomers) of a molecule.

BUSINESS

GM soya levy

The biotechnology giant Monsanto is one step closer to losing billions of dollars in revenues from its genetically modified (GM) Roundup Ready soya beans in Brazil. Monsanto, headquartered in St Louis, Missouri, levies a charge on Brazilian farmers who grow soya beans that turn out to be GM. Farmers say it is impossible to avoid growing GM soya because of contamination, and in April they won a challenge in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, where a judge ruled that the company's levy was illegal. The ruling is currently suspended, pending consideration by a higher court. But on 12 June,

the Brazilian Supreme Court of Justice said it should apply nationwide. See go.nature.com/mowmyh for more.

Fossil smuggling

A nearly complete tyrannosaurid fossil that sold for US\$1 million was illegally smuggled out of Mongolia, according to a civil complaint seeking the fossil's return, which was filed on 18 June by the US Department of Justice. Despite a restraining order obtained by the Mongolian government from a Texas court to prevent the sale or transfer of the fossil, Heritage Auctions based in Dallas, Texas, auctioned off the *Tarbosaurus bataar* fossil in New York last month.

RESEARCH

Diesel cancer links

Diesel exhaust is carcinogenic to humans, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) declared on 12 June after a meeting in Lyons, France. Diesel emissions were previously classed as 'probably' carcinogenic; the latest conclusion followed the publication in March of a long-delayed US government study showing how exposure to diesel exhaust increases the risk of lung cancer in miners. The IARC's pronouncement is purely scientific; it will be up to national regulatory agencies

COMING UP

24 JUNE–6 JULY

In St Petersburg, Russia, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's World Heritage Committee meets to discuss the state of conservation sites including Australia's Great Barrier Reef.

whc36-russia2012.ru

26–28 JUNE

In Washington, Seattle, marine scientists plan out an international network to monitor the acidification of the oceans.

go.nature.com/topgt6

to decide how to proceed. See go.nature.com/dddpaz for more.

Space X-rays

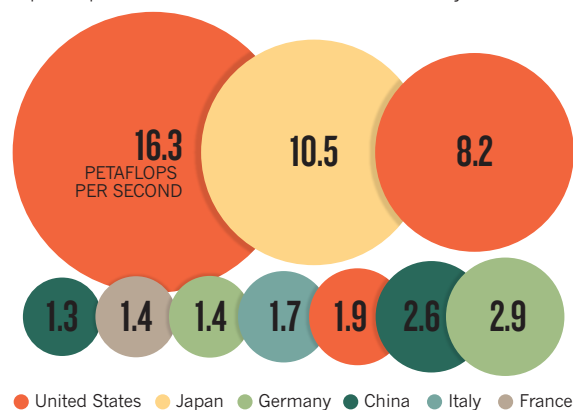
NASA's NuSTAR telescope, which will examine high-energy X-rays produced at the thresholds of black holes (see *Nature* **483**, 255; 2012), was launched into low-Earth orbit on 13 June. The low-cost mission is one of only a few available to X-ray astronomers. See go.nature.com/dcy8k for more.

TREND WATCH

The United States, which two years ago yielded the title of host to the world's top supercomputer — bested first by China and then by Japan — has roared back into the lead in this month's list of the world's top 500 supercomputers, with the Sequoia machine at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California. It also claimed third place with a supercomputer at Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois. Italy made its top-ten debut with a system at the CINECA computing centre near Bologna.

WORLD'S FASTEST COMPUTERS

The United States reclaims the top spot for first time in two years with a supercomputer at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California.



CORRECTIONS

The story 'Nobel laureate dies' (*Nature* **486**, 11; 2012) should have said that Andrew Huxley did his award-winning work at the Laboratory of the Marine Biological Association in Plymouth, not the Plymouth Marine Laboratory. And 'Piezonuclear row' (*Nature* **486**, 162; 2012) gave the wrong name for INRiM: it is the National Institute for Metrological Research.

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