

## BUSINESS

### Speed machine

The world's only quantum-computer seller has secured another customer — a collaboration between Google, NASA and the non-profit Universities Space Research Association. D-Wave, of Burnaby, Canada, made the announcement on 16 May. The deal was sealed after computer scientist Catherine McGeoch of Amherst College, Massachusetts, showed in a speed test that the machine can perform some tasks up to 3,600 times faster than conventional computing methods. Google, based in Mountain View, California, said that the computer would be used for machine-learning research. See [go.nature.com/ufvacw](http://go.nature.com/ufvacw) for more.

## POLICY

### Fish progress

Fisheries ministers on 15 May reached a potential turning point in the European Union's efforts to reform its commercial fishing policy. The rules have been criticized for allowing large catches that exceed scientific recommendations, but a lack of agreement between member-state ministers, the European Parliament and the European Commission has stalled changes. Ministers have now inched towards the goals favoured by Europe's Parliament, which include restoring fish stocks to certain biomass levels and setting tougher limits on waste of unwanted fish. See [go.nature.com/l6hx5y](http://go.nature.com/l6hx5y) for more.

### Chilean science

Chile should have a science ministry, a panel of scientists and economists has recommended to Chilean President Sebastián Piñera in



ALEXANDER JOE/AFP/GETTY

## Africa's eyes on the radio sky

South Africa's astronomical ambitions received a boost on 15 May, when the first results from a seven-dish radio-telescope array were released. The KAT-7 array, based in the Northern Cape, observed two strong radio flares from the binary-star system Circinus X-1, and monitored their progression. An international team of astronomers reports the findings in a paper accepted by *Monthly Notices of the*

*Royal Astronomical Society* (R. P. Armstrong *et al.* Preprint available at <http://arxiv.org/abs/1305.3399>). KAT-7 (two dishes pictured) serves as a test bed for the MeerKAT 64-telescope array, which will form part of the larger and more powerful Square Kilometre Array (SKA). The SKA is a planned €1.5-billion (US\$1.93-billion) radio-telescope array, to be built across sites in South Africa and Australia.

a report delivered on 15 May. Piñera had created the advisory commission in January. The panel's report notes that science governance in the country is fragmented in uncoordinated institutions, and would benefit from being placed, along with higher education, in a dedicated ministry. Chilean scientists have repeatedly requested the same reform, most recently in a letter to the president in April.

### Indonesia's forests

Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on 15 May extended a moratorium on new licences to log and clear virgin rainforest and peatlands in the country for another two years. Indonesia initially

established the moratorium in 2011 after committing to reduce its greenhouse-gas emissions, which arise primarily from deforestation and the destruction of peatlands. Scientists and environmentalists have criticized loopholes in the moratorium but say that the decision will give the country more time to develop a broader forest-protection plan.

### Arctic group grows

At its biennial meeting last week in Kiruna, Sweden, the Arctic Council granted observer status to China, India, Italy, Japan, Singapore and South Korea. The council, established in 1996 and headed by eight Arctic nations, promotes sustainable

development in the warming polar region. Its expansion, which doubled the number of observer nations, reflects growing economic interest in and environmental concerns about oil and gas resources in the Arctic. Council members also signed a cooperative agreement addressing preparedness for and responses to marine oil spills.

### Stem-cell safety

Italian scientists have persuaded a reluctant parliament to amend a controversial decree that would have allowed severely ill patients to continue treatment with an unproven, and possibly unsafe, stem-cell therapy (see *Nature* 495, 418–419; 2013). This week, the

Senate is expected to accept amendments voted for by the parliament's other house, the Chamber of Deputies, on 20 May. These would subject the therapy, developed by the Stamina Foundation in Brescia, to regulatory oversight. The government will make €3 million (US\$3.9 million) available to test the therapy in clinical trials. See [go.nature.com/lqqum](http://go.nature.com/lqqum) for more.

## FACILITIES

**Brazil investment**

Brazil's São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), one of the country's largest science-funding agencies, announced on 15 May the establishment of 17 Research, Innovation and Dissemination Centers. The research centres will focus on innovation and technology transfer in a variety of areas, from nutrition and neuroscience to functional materials and photonics. FAPESP plans to invest US\$370 million over 11 years, to be matched by \$310 million in salaries from host institutions.

## PEOPLE

**One down, one to go**

The US Senate voted unanimously on 16 May to confirm physicist Ernest Moniz (pictured) as head of the Department of



Energy. Moniz, director of the Energy Initiative at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, is known for his strong support of natural gas and nuclear power. The Senate has yet to vote on the nomination of Gina McCarthy to lead the Environmental Protection Agency. See page 418 for more.

**Nobel laureate dies**

Heinrich Rohrer, a Nobel-prizewinning Swiss physicist, died on 16 May at the age of 79. Together with Gerd Binnig, Rohrer shared half of the 1986 Nobel Prize in Physics for the invention of the scanning tunnelling microscope while at the IBM Research Laboratories in Zurich, Switzerland. The instrument allows researchers to image and manipulate individual atoms on electrically conductive surfaces.

## EVENTS

**Impact-factor abuse**

More than 480 researchers and scientific organizations have signed a declaration condemning the use of the journal impact factor (JIF) to gauge scholarly success. According to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment, released on 16 May, the JIF — an average measure of how often a journal's articles are cited — is misused to assess the significance of work by scientists who publish in those journals. The declaration recommends alternative metrics for evaluating researchers, including citation counts of individual articles. See [go.nature.com/nvqgwj](http://go.nature.com/nvqgwj) for more.

## RESEARCH

**Mission stalls**

Kepler, NASA's planet-hunting spacecraft, may be on its last legs. On 14 May, the spacecraft entered a protective mode and stopped collecting data. See page 417 for more.

**Distant particles**

A handful of neutrinos detected at the South Pole probably came from beyond Earth's atmosphere, according to an international group of

## COMING UP

**28–30 MAY**

Government leaders and energy experts at the Vienna Energy Forum discuss the state of energy access and sustainable energy development, one year after the Rio+20 Summit.

[go.nature.com/wsv69r](http://go.nature.com/wsv69r)

**29–31 MAY**

Researchers focus on environmental, chemical and genetic influences on bone-marrow diseases at a New York Academy of Sciences meeting.

[go.nature.com/k5dt82](http://go.nature.com/k5dt82)

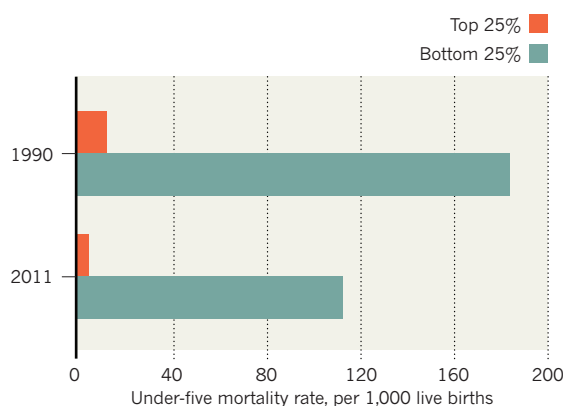
researchers. At a conference in Madison, Wisconsin, the IceCube collaboration reported on 15 May that its sensors had collected 28 neutrinos with energies far exceeding those from cosmic rays hitting Earth's atmosphere. The finding raises hopes that the particles could be traced back to some of the most energetic phenomena in the Universe, such as active black holes or  $\gamma$ -ray bursts from collapsing stars. See [go.nature.com/pon2qj](http://go.nature.com/pon2qj) for more.

## TREND WATCH

Health gaps between the world's most- and least-advantaged countries have narrowed over the past two decades in areas such as child survival (see chart), maternal deaths in childbirth and deaths from tuberculosis. In its latest statistics, released on 15 May, the World Health Organization found improvements in many countries, but projected that progress was not fast enough to meet 2015 Millennium Development Goals, such as cutting child mortality by two-thirds from 1990 levels.

**HEALTH GAP NARROWS**

The difference in child mortality between the world's most- and least-advantaged countries has fallen since 1990.

**MENTORING AWARDS**

Nominations for *Nature's* annual awards for science mentoring are open until 20 August. This year, *Nature* seeks to honour two outstanding mentors in Italy, who will each receive €10,000 (US\$12,800). The panel of judges is led by physicist Luciano Maiani of CERN, Europe's particle-physics lab near Geneva in Switzerland. See [go.nature.com/o7bltb](http://go.nature.com/o7bltb) for more.

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