

POLICY

E-cigarette reports

Electronic cigarettes need more-stringent regulations, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on 26 August. The agency says that bans on indoor 'vaping' and on sales to minors should be put in place until there is more evidence of the devices' safety and the health risks are better understood. In a separate report, released on 25 August, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found a threefold increase from 2011 to 2013 in the number of US school-age e-cigarette users who had not smoked previously. See page 24 for more.

Animal welfare

Labs certified by the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC) International violate animal-research rules more often than non-accredited labs, according to a study by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). AAALAC International certification is the 'gold standard' for animal welfare; funding agencies including the US National Institutes of Health grant accredited labs privileges such as inspection waivers. PETA examined records for more than 800 US labs, and presented its findings on 25 August at the 9th World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences.

Corals protected

On 27 August, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration listed 20 species of coral as threatened under the auspices of the Endangered Species Act. In November 2012, the agency had proposed listing



EGGERT JOHANNESSEN/AP

Seismic unrest at Bárðarbunga

Iceland's Bárðarbunga volcano erupted on 29 August, spurting lava out of a 1.5-kilometre-long fissure in a barren lava field (pictured). The surface eruption continued intermittently over the following days, and is the latest manifestation of a massive underground movement of magma,

which has created a buried wall of fresh rock some 45 kilometres long. As of 1 September, no ash had been emitted. But halfway around the world, the Rabaul volcano in Papua New Guinea spewed ash on 29 August, leading to the re-routing of several flights in the area.

54 coral species as threatened and 12 as endangered. It had also suggested changing the status of the elkhorn (*Acropora palmata*) and staghorn (*Acropora cervicornis*) from threatened to endangered. The agency says that it narrowed the list owing to public comments as well as research findings on coral biology, habitat, distribution and abundance.

Reburied remains

A US federal court ruled on 27 August against scientists seeking to prevent the reburial of 9,000-year-old human remains. The bones were found on the campus of the University of California, San Diego, in 1976. In 2012, the university acquiesced to a request from the Kumeyaay Native American tribes to return the bones. But a group

of palaeoanthropologists sued the university in an attempt to block the return, claiming that the Kumeyaay were not culturally affiliated with the remains. The Ninth Circuit appeals court in San Francisco rejected the scientists' claim.

Data sharing

All genomics data generated through large-scale projects funded by the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) must be shared online, the agency said on 27 August. The NIH previously required such sharing only for genome-wide association studies. Researchers must also ask study participants for consent to share their data for use in future research — a policy that also applies to cell lines and clinical specimens such as tissue samples. See go.nature.com/hi4xsx for more.

Institute reform

The Japanese institute at the centre of a misconduct scandal has announced that it will be renamed and that the number of its laboratories will be cut. Although world renowned, the RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology in Kobe has been under fire after biochemist Haruko Obokata was found guilty of scientific misconduct. Its director Masatoshi Takeichi will also step down. See go.nature.com/fvyj36 for more.

EVENTS

Satellites stuck

A pair of satellites for Europe's Galileo global navigation system, which suffered a botched launch on 22 August, do not have enough fuel to reach their intended orbits, says the European Space

FERMILAB

Agency. The satellites, which are stuck in an elliptical orbit at a lower altitude than planned, might still be useful for some navigation or test purposes, the agency says. A report into the faulty launch is expected on 8 September.

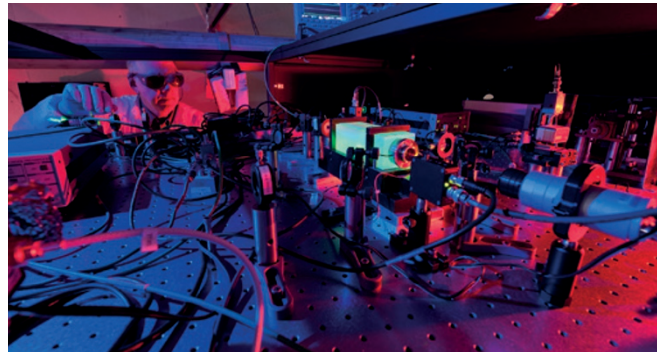
RESEARCH

Comet landing sites

The European Space Agency announced a list of candidate landing sites for its robotic comet probe, Philae, on 25 August. In the first ever attempt to land on a comet, the agency's Rosetta spacecraft will dispatch Philae to the surface of 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko in November. Studies have identified five potential sites on the rubber-duck-shaped comet — three on its 'head' and two on its 'body' — on the basis of landing constraints and scientific priorities. Sites will be assessed and ranked by 14 September.

Hologram test

An experiment designed to test whether the Universe is a two-dimensional hologram has begun collecting data, the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory near Batavia, Illinois, announced on 26 August. The project scientists hypothesize that what we perceive to be a third dimension could actually be



information encoded in a two-dimensional reality. In principle, such a phenomenon would have a measurable signature, which the lab's Holographic Interferometer (pictured), or Holometer, will attempt to detect using twin lasers.

Mission reprieve

Two NASA missions considered on the verge of closure — the Mars Opportunity Rover and the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter — will continue for another two years, scientists close to the projects have confirmed. The news broke ahead of a long-awaited review to set priorities on NASA's planetary missions in the event that tight budgets force the agency to switch off operating spacecraft. The review is expected to be released on 3 September. See go.nature.com/1fi8m5 for more.

Ebola vaccine trials

The US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases announced on 28 August a series of phase I trials of Ebola vaccines in healthy volunteers. A trial of a vaccine developed with pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline will begin next week; another, developed by the Public Health Agency of Canada and licensed to the company NewLink Genetics in Ames, Iowa, is expected to undergo safety studies in the autumn. The trials will assess immune responses and vaccine safety. See page 13 for more.

BUSINESS

Space-junk system

US defence company Lockheed Martin in Bethesda, Maryland, has signed a deal with Electro Optic Systems in Canberra to build a space-debris tracking station in

Western Australia. The station will use advanced laser and optical technology to detect, follow and identify space junk that can damage satellites. It will complement radar-based systems such as the US Air Force's Space Fence, to be built by Lockheed Martin, which will track about 200,000 objects. There are an estimated 500,000 pieces of debris larger than a marble spinning around Earth at about 28,000 kilometres per hour.

Stem-cell trial

A landmark stem-cell trial that was abruptly stopped in 2011 has been given a green light to restart by the US Food and Drug Administration. Asterias Biotherapeutics of Menlo Park, California, announced on 27 August that in early 2015 it will start a safety and efficacy trial of a treatment involving nerve-cell precursors derived from human embryonic stem cells. Thirteen patients with spinal-cord damage in the neck will receive the therapy within a month of their injuries (see *Nature* 510, 18; 2014). Geron of Menlo Park, California, which originally started the trial, had stopped the study to focus on cancer treatments.

Investment ban

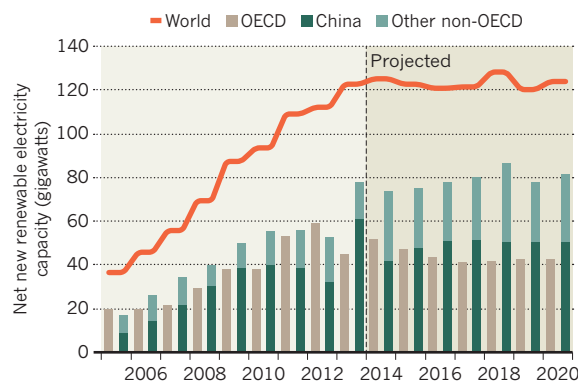
The University of Sydney in Australia has ceased to invest in coal mining, making it the first such institution in the country to do so, according to media reports. On 25 August the university announced that it will no longer invest in Whitehaven Coal, a Sydney-based company that is developing Australia's largest open coal mine. The following day, the institution said that its divestment extends to the whole coal and consumable fuels sector. The move follows a campaign from the environmental group Greenpeace, calling on the university to divest from Whitehaven Coal.

TREND WATCH

Renewable-power capacity grew faster than ever before in 2013 — but growth should level off by 2020, the Paris-based International Energy Agency says in this year's *Renewable Energy: Medium-Term Market Report*. The report, released on 28 August, says that policy and market risks are making it difficult to forecast deployment, including doubts about how to integrate renewable power into the electricity grid; and uncertainty over whether subsidies and tax incentives will be maintained.

FLAT PREDICTION FOR RENEWABLES

The International Energy Agency expects most of the growth in capacity to come from countries outside the OECD, particularly from China.



OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

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