

investigating local water pollution. The report also calls for greater investment in school lab facilities and technicians, to allow for more interesting practical work.

“School science concentrates too much on churning out exam candidates,” agrees Alistair MacFarlane, chair of the Royal Society’s education committee.

## Britain needed over future foot-and-mouth policy

**London** The emergency vaccination of livestock should be used to control future outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease in Britain, says a report from the Royal Society.

The report, *Infectious Diseases in Livestock*, also calls for a comprehensive response plan to be drawn up for dealing with any future outbreaks. A similar recommendation was made by the official inquiry into a previous outbreak in 1967–68, but was never implemented.

Six million animals were slaughtered to halt last year’s British epidemic. The government rejected vaccination because officially sanctioned tests could not tell diseased from vaccinated animals.

The Royal Society report notes that tests are now available that can make this distinction. In May, the Paris-based World Organisation for Animal Health agreed to

relax trade restrictions on vaccinated animals that had been checked using such tests.

## Sect claims hundreds of cloned embryos

**Tokyo** Clonaid, a company founded by the Raëlian religious sect, claims to have created hundreds of cloned human embryos that are now stored, ready for implantation into women volunteers. Mainstream researchers are deeply sceptical of Clonaid’s claims, but warn that any attempt to implant a cloned embryo would pose serious risks to the health of both embryo and surrogate mother.

Clonaid representatives made the claim at the 1st International Bio Expo Japan in Tokyo last week, where they were marketing a device for achieving cell fusion, which is central to cloning. The device is produced by Bio Fusion Tech of Daegu, Korea, a company with no other product.

## Anglers on line to tackle invading snakeheads

**Washington** It has been billed in much of the US media as an attack of ‘Frankenfish’ that threatens Maryland’s native freshwater species. In late June, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources received a photograph from an angler of a northern



Causing a splash: this juvenile northern snakehead will grow into a voracious predator.

snakehead (*Channa argus*), a voracious predator from China, that was caught in a pond near the town of Crofton. Further reports of catches from the same pond followed. Because the snakehead can survive out of water for several days, and can travel over land for short distances, the incident was soon reported as an ecological disaster.

Investigations revealed that a Hong Kong-born local had released two snakeheads into the pond, which now seem to be breeding. Officials are hopeful that the invaders have not spread and can be eliminated.

► [www.dnr.state.md.us/fisheries](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/fisheries)

**Correction** In last week’s News Feature on attitudes to misconduct in the physical sciences (see *Nature* 418, 120–121; 2002), Paul Canfield was misidentified as a materials scientist at the University of Iowa. He is in fact a physicist at Iowa State University.