

SEVEN DAYS

The news in brief

POLICY

Climate case

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) must be reorganized to create a proper climate service, the agency's head has told US politicians. Appearing before Congress on 22 June, Jane Lubchenco said the climate research and forecasting parts of NOAA should be pulled together into one body. Earlier this year, climate-sceptic members of Congress explicitly blocked the move when awarding 2011 funding for NOAA. See go.nature.com/gkhpmy for more.

Safety meeting

A week-long ministerial-level meeting convened in Vienna by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to try to reach a consensus on strengthening international nuclear safety regimes in the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster ended last Friday with no agreement on new measures. Countries were reluctant to give the IAEA new powers, such as allowing random safety spot checks at plants, with many considering nuclear safety a national prerogative. The meeting postponed any major

SOUND BITE

“There is no alternative to nuclear energy today.”

French President Nicolas Sarkozy, pledging €1 billion (US\$1.4 billion) to develop nuclear technology.

Source: AP



MOE/TAKAHIRO OKANO

UNESCO protects more heritage sites

Japan's Ogasawara Islands, including Chichi-jima and Minami-jima pictured here, are among the latest sites inscribed on the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The islands, some 1,000 kilometres south of Tokyo, contain hundreds of endangered and endemic species. They are joined by sites including Kenya's Great

Rift Valley Lake System and Western Australia's remote Ningaloo coast following the UNESCO heritage commission meeting in Paris, which ended on 29 June. The meeting also heard that the listed sites of Indonesia's tropical rainforest of Sumatra and the Honduran Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve are threatened by human activity and are now on a danger list.

decisions, asking the IAEA to submit an 'action plan' for review at the agency's annual general conference in September.

Fixes for warming

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change convened an expert meeting in Lima on 20–22 June to discuss how it plans to cover geoengineering in its upcoming fifth assessment report. The meeting brought together the co-chairs of all three working groups as well as various outside experts to identify potential areas of research that should be assessed, from economic and risk assessments to

policy frameworks and the physical basis for climate modification.

AWARDS

Wen Jiabao's medal

The Royal Society in London, Britain's national academy of science, awarded its most overtly political medal to China's Premier Wen Jiabao on 27 June. Wen, who trained as a geologist, was visiting the United Kingdom to sign off on trade deals worth £1.4 billion (US\$2.2 billion) between China and Britain when he was presented with the King Charles II Medal. The award is given to foreign heads of state or government who have made

an "outstanding contribution to furthering scientific research in their country" and has been given only three times before: last year to Germany's chancellor, Angela Merkel; in 2007 to India's former president, A. P. J. Abdul Kalam; and in 1998 to Emperor Akihito of Japan. See go.nature.com/acxyhp for more.

Kyoto prizewinners

This year's ¥50-million (US\$624,000) Kyoto prizes in science have been won by Rashid Sunyaev and John Cahn. Sunyaev, director of the Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics in Garching, Germany, won the basic-sciences prize for his work

on cosmic microwave background radiation. Cahn, of the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, Maryland, was awarded the advanced-technology prize for his work on alloys.

RESEARCH

Open-access journal

Three major life-sciences research funders have teamed up to launch an open-access journal. The Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Max Planck Society and the Wellcome Trust announced the launch of the currently unnamed title on 27 June. It will publish biomedical and life-sciences research and the first issue should appear in summer 2012, with an editor-in-chief currently being sought. See go.nature.com/p1h5vl for more.

Plagiarism fallout

Silvana Koch-Mehrin of Germany's Free Democratic Party (FDP) withdrew from the European Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy on 25 June, after four days of full membership. Her appointment had been protested by science organizations in Germany because Heidelberg University had revoked her PhD on economic history on

15 June, citing plagiarism. The seat on the committee was formerly occupied by Jorgo Chatzimarkakis (FDP, Germany), whose PhD thesis is itself under investigation for plagiarism by the University of Bonn. The events follow a scandal in March when defence minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg resigned after much of his PhD thesis was found to be copied.



Art funds science

A Pablo Picasso painting donated to the University of Sydney, Australia, sold for £13.5 million (US\$21.6 million) at an auction in London on 21 June. The 1935 work *Jeune Fille Endormie* (pictured) was given to the university in 2010 on the condition that it be sold to raise funds for scientific research.

China ice-breaker

China announced last week that it will start building a research ice-breaker later this year, with the vessel expected

to be operational in polar expeditions in 2013. It will join the MV *Xuelong*, China's existing ice-breaker and research vessel, which was bought from Ukraine in 1993.

PEOPLE

Klein blues over

Financier Jonathan Thomas has been elected to replace Robert Klein as chairman of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine in San Francisco. The decision, approved by the agency's board on 22 June, ends months of uncertainty over who would replace Klein, who led the agency since its inception in 2004. Thomas told the board that he would take a hands-on approach and has obtained an annual salary of US\$400,000, more than is earned by the state governor.

Food agency head

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations has appointed a new director-general for the first time in 18 years. José Graziano da Silva, the former Brazilian food-security minister, will succeed Senegal's Jacques Diouf in the post from 1 January 2012. Graziano da Silva was elected on 26 June, at a biennial FAO conference in Rome; his term is restricted to 3.5 years. He faces pressure from donors to cut bureaucracy

COMING UP

3-8 JULY

Astrobiologists gather in Montpellier, France, for the Origins 2011 conference on the origins of life.

go.nature.com/o7fdum

4-8 JULY

Scientists and policy-makers meet in Banff, Canada, to discuss the Square Kilometre Array radio telescope.

www.ska2011.org

at the organization, which has a budget of US\$1 billion for 2010-11.

BUSINESS

Dental deal done

Pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca has sealed a deal to sell its Astra Tech dental business for US\$1.8 billion, it announced on 22 June. Astra Tech is based in Mölndal, Sweden, and conducts research into and develops medical devices for urology and surgery as well as dental implants. The company has been bought by DENTSPLY of York, Pennsylvania.

Emissions expense

Carbon prices in the European Union's Emissions Trading Scheme will probably increase by €5 (US\$7) per tonne as a result of Japan's 11 March earthquake, according to Thomson Reuters Point Carbon, a consultancy firm in Oslo. In the wake of the Fukushima nuclear accident triggered by the quake, Germany is to phase out nuclear power by 2022, and will have to burn more coal to compensate. Point Carbon estimates that Europe will emit an extra 490 megatonnes of carbon by 2020 as a result, driving up the price of carbon credits.

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TREND WATCH

Investment in research and development for the fight against malaria has increased from US\$121 million in 1993 to \$612 million in 2009, with a particularly large rise since 2004, according to a report published on 28 June. The report, which was commissioned by the international health charity PATH and Roll Back Malaria, says that although research funding targets are now largely being met, the global financial crisis may undo this progress. See go.nature.com/7gqqoo for more.

MALARIA R&D ON THE RISE

But diagnostics and vector control are comparatively underfunded.

