

## POLICY

### UN science advice

The United Nations is to set up an international board of science advisers, to be selected by its Environmental, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The board's remit is to promote cooperation on science-related issues between UN agencies, and with the international scientific community. UNESCO's director-general, Irina Bokova, announced the decision on 22 June at the Rio+20 conference on sustainable development. See [go.nature.com/2zxlep](http://go.nature.com/2zxlep) for more. The conference itself concluded with modest and mostly voluntary commitments to sustainable-development goals after 2015. See page 447 for more.

### Romania plagiarism

More than 6,000 scientists and academics have signed an online petition calling on Romanian Prime Minister Victor Ponta to resign, after *Nature* revealed allegations of extensive plagiarism in Ponta's doctoral thesis (see *Nature* **486**, 305; 2012).

### Primate transport

Israeli airline El Al has added itself to the list of air carriers refusing to transport monkeys for medical research. Its decision follows an Israeli supreme-court ruling this month that banned a breeding facility near Tel Aviv from exporting wild-caught monkeys to the United States. Activists worldwide mounted a campaign to pressure El Al not to fly even captive-born monkeys (which the court ruling had permitted). The airline's decision was announced on 18 June in a terse letter to the Israeli animal-advocacy group Let the Animals Live. See [go.nature.com/3sqalw](http://go.nature.com/3sqalw) for more.



K. SZULECKA/FLPA

## Farewell, Lonesome George

Lonesome George, the Galapagos giant tortoise widely known as the rarest in the world, died unexpectedly on 24 June, at the age of around 100. George was discovered in 1971, and conservationists had hoped to coax his subspecies (*Chelonoidis nigra abingdoni*) back from the brink of extinction. But no

others of his kind were ever found, and George stayed mainly indifferent to female tortoises of different subspecies that were introduced to him. He became a conservation icon: a quiet but powerful ambassador for the Galapagos Islands and for endangered species everywhere. See [go.nature.com/hamvew](http://go.nature.com/hamvew) for more.

### Korean creationism

In response to a public outcry over the removal of examples of evolution from school biology textbooks (see *Nature* **486**, 14; 2012), South Korea's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is to set up a panel to oversee future revisions of science textbooks. See [go.nature.com/fcivld](http://go.nature.com/fcivld) for more.

### Drug approvals

US legislation that allows drug-makers to pay a fee in return for a speedier approval process looks likely to be renewed for the next five years. The bill, called the Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA), was first enacted in 1992; its fifth

version reached a near-final step on 20 June, when the House of Representatives voted to re-authorize it. Up to 2017, PDUFA V is expected to generate billions of dollars for the US Food and Drug Administration in new fees from generic and biosimilar drug-makers. See [go.nature.com/kp5ixp](http://go.nature.com/kp5ixp) for more.

## RESEARCH

### Open data

Hoarding research data is a "serious impediment" to the scientific process, the UK Royal Society notes in a 21 June report, *Science as an Open Enterprise*. It urges funders, institutions and scientists to

"shift away from a research culture where data is viewed as a private preserve" and to give greater recognition to the importance of generating and curating data. See page 441 and [go.nature.com/nkt9ls](http://go.nature.com/nkt9ls) for more.

### Agriculture reform

A major global agricultural network — the CGIAR Consortium — launched its reshaped science programme at the Rio+20 conference in Brazil last week. The consortium, which supports some 8,000 scientists and staff in 15 centres around the world, has restructured its work into 15 research programmes, ranging from improving the yields of crops to studies on agricultural

policies and markets. Its budget will be around US\$1 billion a year from 2013. See [go.nature.com/bogcnz](http://go.nature.com/bogcnz) for more.

## EVENTS

## China dock and dive

China is celebrating feats of technological prowess in space and under the sea. On 24 June, three astronauts on the country's *Shenzhou 9* spacecraft achieved a first-ever manual docking with its orbiting space module, Tiangong 1. On the same day, the country's manned research submersible *Jiaolong* successfully completed its deepest test dive, to 7,020 metres in the Mariana Trench in the western Pacific Ocean. See [go.nature.com/bocfdj](http://go.nature.com/bocfdj) for more.

## Nuclear protests

In the largest of many demonstrations against the imminent restart of nuclear reactors in Japan (**pictured**), around 40,000 protesters rallied in front of the prime minister's residence in Tokyo on 22 June. The protests, unusual in a country not known for political activism, followed approvals earlier this month by local and central government to restart two reactors at the Ohi power station in Fukui prefecture. They would be the first shuttered plants to reopen since the Fukushima nuclear disaster



in March 2011, and would start generating power in July.

## PEOPLE

## Psychology fraud

Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands announced on 25 June that after an internal investigation it would retract two papers from social psychologist Dirk Smeesters, and had accepted his resignation. Smeesters is a professor specializing in consumer behaviour at the university's Rotterdam School of Management. His misconduct comes in the wake of findings of fraud by another social psychologist, Diederik Stapel, at Tilburg University in the Netherlands (see *Nature*, **479**, 15; 2011).

## Turkish arrest

Kemal Gürüz, a prominent academic reformer in Turkey, was arrested and jailed in Ankara on 25 June. Charges have not yet been formally published, but reportedly

concern the allegation that Gürüz informed the military about the political orientation of Turkish university rectors when he was president of the Turkish Council of Higher Education between 1995 and 2003. Many academics and human-rights workers say the charges are trumped up. Gürüz, a defender of secularism in universities, was also arrested in 2009 with other academics and charged with membership of an antigovernment organization (see *Nature* **470**, 436; 2011); that case is ongoing. See [go.nature.com/14nawu](http://go.nature.com/14nawu) for more.

## Kyoto prizewinners

This year's ¥50-million (US\$626,000) Kyoto prizes in science have been won by Yoshinori Ohsumi and Ivan Sutherland. Ohsumi, a molecular biologist at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, won the basic-sciences prize for his work in the field of autophagy. Computer scientist Sutherland at Portland State University in Oregon was awarded the advanced-technology prize for his work on graphics and user interfaces.

## Egypt's elections

Scientists in Egypt are hoping for a renaissance after a politician with a background in materials science and engineering won the country's presidential

## COMING UP

## 1-6 JULY

More than 25 Nobel prizewinners meet with hundreds of young researchers at the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting in Germany, which this year is dedicated to physics. [www.lindau-nobel.org](http://www.lindau-nobel.org)

## 4-11 JULY

Expect more results in the hunt for the Higgs boson, as the latest data from CERN, Europe's particle-physics laboratory, are discussed at a conference on high-energy physics in Melbourne, Australia. [ichep2012.com.au](http://ichep2012.com.au)

elections. Mohammed Morsi, the candidate for the Muslim Brotherhood, gained a PhD at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, and from 1985 to 2010 headed the materials-science department at Zagazig University in Egypt. He has promised to increase research spending. See [go.nature.com/dxnur4](http://go.nature.com/dxnur4) for more.

## STANDING UP FOR SCIENCE

Nominations are invited for the John Maddox Prize, which will reward an individual in any country who has promoted sound science and evidence on a matter of public interest. The £2,000 (US\$3,000) prize puts emphasis on those who have faced difficulty or hostility for their efforts. The prize is awarded by *Nature* and Sense About Science, and is supported by the Kohn Foundation. The deadline for nominations is 20 August 2012. See [go.nature.com/9rvd1t](http://go.nature.com/9rvd1t).

## TREND WATCH

The fishing power of fleets in the world's oceans (measured by factors including ship engine power and vessel size) has increased 10-fold since the 1950s — and 25-fold in Asia. Yet the amount of fish caught for each standardized unit of fishing effort has halved (see chart), illustrating the decline in fish resources, according to an analysis led by an international team of fisheries scientists, published on 19 June (R. A. Watson *et al.* *Fish Fish*. <http://doi.org/hz2>; 2012).

## DIMINISHING RETURNS ON FISHING

For each unit of fishing power expended by fleets, fish catches are now half what they were in 1950.

