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China on track for #2 most influential country in science publishing by 2014

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China now publishes more than 6% of the papers published in Nature journals, according to the *Nature Publishing Index 2011 China*. Published today as a supplement to *Nature*, the Index provides yet more evidence that China is fast becoming a global leader in scientific publishing and scientific research.

Papers with authors from China represent 6.6% (225) of the 3425 papers published in Nature journals in 2011, up from 5.3% (152 papers) in 2010. By comparison, authors from China published just 12 papers in Nature journals in 2000. Notably, of the 225 papers published in 2011, 48 were published in *Nature Communications* which launched in April 2010.

The *Nature Publishing Index 2011 China* also presents a new analysis of ISI Web of Knowledge data, showing that China now publishes more than 10% of the world's most cited scientific research. China increased its share of the top 1% of highly cited scientific articles from 1.85% (127 out of 6,874 articles) in 2001 to 11.3% (1,158 out of 10,238 articles) in 2011, and now ranks fourth globally. By 2014, China could surpass Germany and the United Kingdom, who currently hold second and third places, says Felix Cheung, Editor of *Nature China* and of the supplement. The United States, which leads the world, has seen its share of highly influential research drop from 64.3% (4,420 out of 6,874 articles) in 2001 to 50.7% (5,190 out of 10,238 articles) in 2011.

The supplement offers insights into how national investments, institutions and cities have contributed to China's rapid scientific expansion.

The top ten Chinese institutions of 2011 are: the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC), Peking University, Tsinghua University, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), Xiamen University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU), the University of Hong Kong (HKU), Nanjing University and BGI Shenzhen.

CAS has an impressive lead, publishing 62 articles in Nature-branded primary research journals in 2011, which is perhaps not surprising given it has over 100 institutes and close to 50,000 researchers. Among the universities, USTC came out number one. "People generally consider Peking and Tsinghua University as the 'big two' in China," says Cheung. "Although the USTC has yet to earn the same level of fame as Peking and Tsinghua University, the reality is that all three institutions are in the same league when it comes to publishing high-quality research."

The Nature Publishing Index 2011 China supplement also presents a ranking by city. The top ten Chinese cities of 2011 for high-quality basic research are: Beijing, Shanghai, Hefei, Hong Kong, Nanjing, Wuhan, Xiamen, Hangzhou, Shenzhen and Xi'an. These ten cities account for approximately 86% of China's contribution to Nature-branded primary research journals in 2011, and also house 19 of the top 20 institutions in the China rankings.

The Index measures the output of research articles from nations and institutes in terms of publications in the 18 Nature-branded primary research journals in 2011, with 2010 and 2009 data included for comparison. "The Nature Publishing Index offers a unique way to assess the high quality research output of an institution or a city in China," said Cheung. "We have analysed the index data and assessed the various strengths of each institution and city."

The Nature Publishing Index 2011 China supplement is available online at **www.natureasia.com/en/publishing-index/china/2011/** and is published as a supplement to Nature today. The ranking is a snapshot based on papers published in 2011, with 2010, 2009 and three-year total (2009–2011) data included for comparison. The index, updated weekly, is available at **www.natureasia.com/publishing-index/china.**

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Notes on the Nature Publishing Index:

The Index results should be used with some caveats. The Index only covers *Nature* and the 17 Nature research journals, so while it offers broad coverage of basic research in the life sciences, physical and chemical sciences, coverage of applied sciences, engineering and clinical medicine is relatively limited, and so the index should be used primarily as an indicator of strength in high quality basic research. It does not incorporate publication in other high quality journals. The Index also only considers one factor — publication output in one family of journals. It does not weight multiple factors in the way that other rankings do, such as the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities or the Times Higher Education World University Rankings.
The output of an institution or country obviously depends on its size. Finally, some institutions have very large numbers of researchers that help drive up their rankings. So it is important to take into account the numbers of researchers in an institution or country when interpreting the results.
The Nature Publishing Index Global 100 (beta) (**www.natureasia.com/en/publishing-index/global/**) ranks the top 100 institutions in the world according to the numbers of papers published in Nature research journals in 2011, and is derived from a beta website covering over 2500 institutions worldwide that published in Nature research journals in 2011. The Nature Publishing Index Global Top 100 (beta) is produced in collaboration with Digital Science, a division of Macmillan Publisher Ltd.

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