

FACILITIES

Telescope boost

Spain has joined the effort to build the world's largest radio telescope, which will probe the early Universe. When complete, the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) will have about 2,000 radio dishes in South Africa and up to 1 million in Australia. The project's €674-million (US\$786-million) first phase was scaled back last year to cut costs; it will now consist of 194 dishes in South Africa and about 130,000 antennas in Australia, and it is due to begin construction in 2020. The project's governing body, the SKA Organisation, has had ten members, including Sweden, the United Kingdom and the two host nations, since Germany left in 2014. Spain will pay an undisclosed membership fee to join, and it will enter into negotiations about its

NATURE'S SALARY SURVEY

If you are a working scientist, or you work in a science-based job, we would love to hear from you in *Nature's* 2018 salary survey. Every two years, we ask you about your job: what you love, what you dislike, what you have done so far and what you would change. The survey takes around 20 minutes to complete, and we will report on the findings later this year. Your answers will help us to identify global trends in income, benefits and job satisfaction, as well as help you to make more-informed career decisions. Survey entrants will have the chance to enter a prize draw to win a £100 or US\$150 Amazon gift card. Take the survey by 16 July at go.nature.com/salariesurvey2018



BETTMAN/GETTY

Gorilla who knew sign language dies

Koko, a gorilla that learnt an adapted version of American Sign Language, died in her sleep on 19 June. She was 46 years old. The announcement came from the California-based non-profit group The Gorilla Foundation, whose co-founder, animal psychologist Francine Patterson, started teaching Koko sign language

in 1972 while studying the cognitive abilities of western lowland gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*). Koko made headlines not only for her language skills — she reportedly used more than 1,000 signs and understood around 2,000 words of spoken English — but also for adopting kittens, the first of which she named All Ball.

contribution to phase one. The SKA hopes that recruiting new members will bring it the funds needed to build the full design of the first phase, says SKA director of communications William Garnier.

POLICY

Trump makeover

US President Donald Trump released a sweeping plan on 21 June to reorganize — and shrink — the federal government. Oversight of fisheries would move from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in the commerce department, to the interior department. The plan also calls for the Food and Drug Administration to be renamed the Federal Drug

Administration, and for its responsibility of ensuring food safety to be transferred to the agriculture department. But the proposal, which would need to be approved by Congress, already faces stiff opposition from top Democrats and is unlikely to take effect. Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama, tried and failed to implement his own government reorganization plan in 2012.

Embryo research

New Zealand's guidelines on the use of human embryos in research are unclear and a barrier to infertility studies, according to a survey of the country's researchers published in *The New Zealand Medical Journal*. Although the use of

human embryos for research is allowed under New Zealand law, guidelines developed in 2005 refer to the use of only non-viable embryos, effectively banning researchers from using viable human embryos, say the survey's authors. Most of the 20 human-embryo researchers surveyed felt that they were disadvantaged by the lack of specific guidance, with 11 saying they had potential research projects that they couldn't take up under the current regulations.

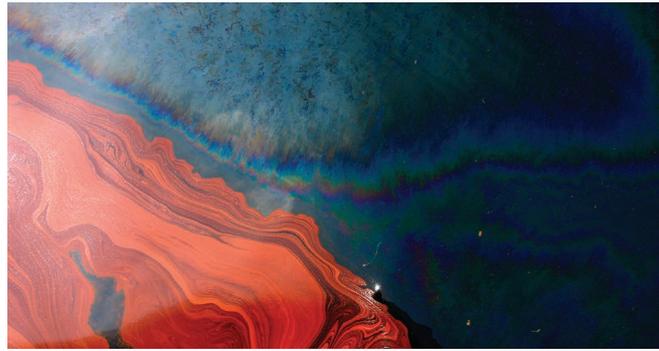
EU copyright laws

A set of controversial changes to copyright rules in the European Union has passed a hurdle on the way to becoming law. The proposed legislation, which covers copyright of

digital material in the EU, would require social-media platforms to pay fees to rightholders for any content or snippets of content uploaded on these platforms. It would also require web services, including repositories for research articles, to actively prevent uploads of copyrighted material. The legislation exempts academic researchers from paying fees to perform data and text-mining — computer-based data searches of large amounts of texts — on sources they have legal access to. But that provision does not cover researchers at commercial companies, prompting fears that it might hamper public-private research collaborations in the EU. The European Parliament's legal-affairs committee voted in favour of the changes on 20 June; they must now be approved by the Parliament and EU member states.

US ocean policy

US President Donald Trump has written climate change out of the country's plan for managing its coastal waters and the Great Lakes. On 19 June, Trump issued a national ocean policy that emphasizes the development of ocean industries, such as offshore oil and gas drilling. The document replaces a policy that former president Barack Obama released in 2010, following the massive



Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico (pictured). That plan came under sustained criticism from Republican politicians for its focus on environmental sustainability and stewardship, including several mentions of climate change.

ENERGY

Power initiatives

The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) has launched a large-scale clean-energy project. On 19 June, it announced that 20 of its institutes will join forces to develop dozens of renewable-energy and energy-efficient technologies before 2023. Together, they will aim to help cut pollution from coal-fired power stations by 40–50%, and replace 100 million tonnes of oil and gas usage. China is the world's largest energy consumer; in 2017, it used 608 million tonnes of oil. On 15 June, state-owned nuclear

power developer China National Nuclear Corporation announced plans to open a university in the east-coast city of Tianjin to train nuclear engineers who will help to ramp up nuclear production and export nuclear technology. China has an ambitious plan to have 58 gigawatts of nuclear generating capacity in operation by 2020, up from 33.6 gigawatts at the end of 2016.

SPACE

Asteroid plan

The US government has reaffirmed its commitment to finding dangerous near-Earth asteroids and developing ways to deflect them if needed. A 20 June federal report outlines how government agencies will cooperate to upgrade detection capabilities, such as by building new telescopes, and how they can collaborate on new computer models to assess impact hazards. The

government has almost tripled its spending on planetary defence in the past few years, from about US\$21 million in 2013 to \$60 million in 2017. Still, NASA is only about one-third of the way to its goal of tracking the roughly 25,000 near-Earth asteroids that are at least 140 metres across — those big enough to cause serious regional damage if they were to hit the planet.

EVENTS

Scientist sacked

Hungary's reform-minded head of research has been dismissed by the country's prime minister, its innovation ministry announced on 20 June. József Pálincás, a physicist and former president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS), was appointed head of the National Research, Development and Innovation Office in 2015, where he led an expansion in science funding. His dismissal comes one week after a government proposal that would hand the innovation ministry control of much of the HAS's research-funding budget. See page 485 for more.

Marijuana drug

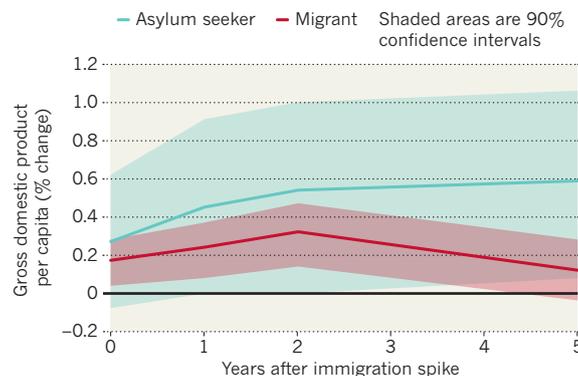
For the first time, the US Food and Drug Administration has approved a treatment containing a component derived from marijuana. In a 25 June announcement, the agency approved Epidiolex, an antiepileptic drug made from cannabidiol. The chemical is found in marijuana but does not cause psychoactive effects. Epidiolex, made by GW Pharmaceuticals in Cambridge, UK, can now be used to treat two epilepsy disorders that manifest in childhood, known as Lennox-Gastaut syndrome and Dravet syndrome. In clinical trials, Epidiolex reduced the number of seizures in some people by more than 50%. The drug is currently under review by the European Medicines Agency.

TREND WATCH

Asylum seekers and migrants searching for safe havens and opportunities benefit their host nations' economies within 5 years of arrival, suggests an analysis of 30 years of data from 15 countries in Western Europe. Researchers modelled how economic indicators, such as gross domestic product per capita, changed following a spike in immigration. Their model suggested that within two years of an influx of migrants, unemployment rates drop significantly and economic health increases.

THE ECONOMICS OF MIGRATION

A mathematical model based on 30 years of data from 15 Western European countries suggests that migrants and asylum seekers do not burden national economies and instead benefit them.



NATURE.COM

For daily news updates see:

www.nature.com/news