

Science Policy Newsletter – a weekly round-up of policy headlines and stories

07 August 2018

News

Top stories

[Innovate UK wins budget increase in BEIS allocations](#)

[NERC invests £22 million in major research programme on the Atlantic Ocean](#)

A new £22 million research programme will investigate the impacts of climate change and human activities on the Atlantic Ocean, from the surface to the deep seabed.

Health and biomedicine

[Keeping cool in a warming world is not a ‘luxury’ for the rich](#)

The heatwaves currently experienced in Europe should be a wake-up call to stop ignoring summer domestic energy poverty, writes Yamina Saheb.

[Factoring in BMI and sex can help to avoid harmful side effects in type 2 diabetes](#)

[Local action on health inequalities amongst ethnic minorities](#)

[Expert interview: How health economists count the cost of unhealthy lifestyles](#)

[Air pollution linked to changes in heart structure](#)

Study shows correlation between levels of exposure to fine particulate matter and chamber enlargement seen in early stages of heart failure.

Food and drink

[MEPs ask Commission to reject industry’s alcohol labelling proposal](#)

A group of MEPs has called on the European Commission to turn down an industry proposal on alcohol labelling, claiming that alcoholic beverages should no longer enjoy a preferential regime compared to other foodstuffs.

Agriculture and fishery

[Environmental farming scheme given green light](#)

Popular “Payment by Results” pilot scheme is granted two years of further funding.

[Commission gives EU farmers ‘temporary relief’ amid extreme droughts](#)

The European Commission decided to grant EU farmers more flexibility in implementing the green requirements in order to face alarming droughts across Europe, the executive said in an announcement.

[SSF Guidelines Update](#)

This e-update provided through the FAO Technical Network on Small-Scale Fisheries informs about recent and upcoming developments in relation to the implementation of the [Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication](#) (SSF Guidelines).

[Natural habitat can help farmers control pests, but not always a win-win](#)

[Science’s search for a super banana](#)

A fruit bowl favourite and a staple food to millions, the banana is under threat from a formidable foe.

Forestry

[Animals and fungi enhance the performance of forests](#)

Environment and ecology

[Government makes no commitment to address collapse in clean energy investment](#)

The Environmental Audit Committee publishes the Government’s response to its report Green Finance: Mobilising Investment in Clean Energy and Sustainable Development.

[Can seagrass help fight ocean acidification?](#)

[Wildfires. Software can model how a wildfire will spread](#)

And also how to stop it happening.

[Fertilizer destroys plant microbiome's ability to protect against disease](#)

Water and air

[10 updates you might have missed from the Marine Management Organisation in July 2018](#)

Climate and energy

[EPSRC announces £16 million investment in Supergen Energy Hubs and Solar Network](#)

[Green light for £3.5 million EU-backed low carbon energy storage initiative](#)

EU funding will help launch a £3.5 million project to pilot new low-carbon technologies and energy-storage products, Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said today.

[Retro-fit fuel poverty houses in Wales to zero carbon standards, says National Assembly Committee](#)

Only a bold and decisive 10-year strategy will boost low-carbon housing construction and help meet Wales' own carbon reduction targets, says a National Assembly committee.

[Global heatwave: Climate change is no longer a two-way debate – Dr Peter Stott](#)

The pattern of heatwaves causing record breaking temperatures across the northern hemisphere would not be seen without climate change, and they have firmly focused the conversation on what we can do about it rather than whether it's happening, according to Peter Stott, professor of detection and attribution of climate change at the University of Exeter, UK.

[Climate change: 'Hothouse Earth' risks even if CO2 emissions slashed](#)

[To keep more carbon on the ground, halting farmland expansion is key](#)

[Tropical forests may soon hinder, not help, climate change effort](#)

Waste

[Plastic food pots and trays are often unrecyclable, say councils](#)

Animal Research

[Draft Animal Welfare \(Sentencing and Recognition of Sentience\) Bill 2017](#)

Sets out the detail of laws the government plans to make, introducing new penalties for animal cruelty, and covering other animal welfare issues.

[Engineered pig lung transplant 'a success'](#)

Research funding and higher education policy

[CaSE Roundtable with BEIS: R&D investment](#)

[Rankings shifts reveal insights on universities making progress](#)

Analysis of movements between World University Ranking groupings shows strategies that are paying off and where others may be losing ground

[Dual appointments 'fail to improve' collaboration with industry](#)

Researchers jointly employed by commercial organisations less likely to partner outside academia

[Whitehall departments being told to cut budgets](#)

[AI research 'essential' for EU, member states say](#)

Open access and publication policy

[Early-career researchers plant one foot in the future](#)

International news

[Helping Colombia meet the challenge of sustainable agriculture](#)

The UK Agri-Tech community is working with Colombian partners to develop bespoke solutions to agricultural challenges.

[Gigantic review of German science recommends more data and diversity](#)

Big data and diversity lacking at Germany's biggest science organization

[Scientists stunned as medical non-profit group abruptly ends research grants](#)

The US-based March of Dimes says it revoked awards to 37 researchers as part of a shift in its funding priorities.

[Sargassum: The seaweed deluge hitting Caribbean shores](#)

Opinion

[How can PhD students engage with policy?](#)

Other

[Entire yeast genome squeezed into one lone chromosome](#)

In a dramatic restructuring, two teams have created versions of baker's yeast with vastly reduced chromosome counts.

People

[Tom Shakespeare: disabled people face medical and social barriers](#)

Leading disability scholar reflects on progress of discipline and key obstacles ahead

[Re-appointments to the Board of AHDB](#)

Re-appointments to the Board of AHDB (Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board)

Opportunities

[RSB policy Internships](#)

The RSB has two internship positions available for current PhD students who are funded by BBSRC, MRC or NERC. Successful applicants will spend three months working at the RSB in Charles Darwin House, during the first half of 2019. Start and end dates can be negotiated as appropriate.

Closes 13 August, 2018.

[You decide what issue an Assembly committee should be looking at – new poll launches](#)

A new poll will ask people in Wales what issue they think a National Assembly committee should be examining.

Closes 8 October, 2018

Consultations

[Air quality: draft Clean Air Strategy 2018](#)

Closes 14 August 2018.

[Call for evidence on conducting ethical research in global health emergencies](#)

The Nuffield Council on Bioethics has launched a call for evidence to inform its inquiry on the ethical issues raised when conducting research in global health emergencies.

Closes 17 August 2018.

[Public Consultation on the evaluation of the Ozone Regulation](#)

Closes 24 August 2018.

[Public consultation on the interim evaluation of the direct management under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund \(EMFF\)](#)

Closes 3 September 2018.

[Committee asks for views on the rural economy](#)

The Select Committee on the Rural Economy has published its call for evidence and invites submissions from all interested individuals and organisations.

Closes 10 September 2018.

[Tackling plastic pollution](#)

Deposit return scheme consultation.

Closes 25 September 2018.

[Balance and effectiveness of research and innovation spending inquiry launched](#)

The Science and Technology Select Committee of the House of Commons is undertaking an inquiry on the balance and effectiveness of research and innovation spending. The RSB response to this consultation is currently in draft. Please contact consultation@rsb.org.uk for more information and if you would like to contribute.

Closes 28 September 2018.

[Draft guidance and criteria set out detailed arrangements for REF 2021](#)

The UK's four higher education funding bodies have published the draft guidance and criteria on making submissions to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021, for consultation.

Closes 15 October 2018

[Technologies for meeting Clean Growth emissions reduction targets inquiry](#)

The Science and Technology Committee is undertaking an inquiry into the technologies needed to meet Clean Growth emissions reduction targets.

Closes 26 October 2018.

Events

[Kent, Surrey and Sussex: Illustrated talk on the health and conservation of the marine environment along the south coast](#)

15 August 2018, Brighton

Discover the marine fauna of the south east coast, its health and conservation with a

talk by Tim Dapling, Chief Fishery Officer of the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority.

[Aquaculture Research Collaborative Hub UK annual science event](#)

4 - 5 September 2018, Belfast, Northern Ireland

On 4th-5th September 2018, ARCH-UK will be holding the 1st Annual Science Meeting in Belfast at the Agri-food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) Headquarters, Newforge Lane.

[Fellows' Lunch - Cardiff](#)

13 September 2018, Cardiff

A small informal lunch to provide Fellows of the Society with the opportunity to discuss current biological issues and the Society's overall direction.

[Workshop on AMR in the Environment](#)

10 - 14 September 2018, Buenos Aires, Argentina

A BBSRC and CONICET partnering workshop on AMR in the Environment in Buenos Aires.

[Tackling Antimicrobial Resistance](#)

17 September 2018, London

A joint event organised by the BTS, the Royal Society of Chemistry Toxicology Group and the British Society of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy.

[BBSRC Artificial Intelligence in Biology Workshop](#)

4 October 2018, John Innes Conference Centre, Norwich

Recent developments in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) are transforming many aspects of technology and engineering. This workshop will explore how such approaches could be used in biological research.

And finally...

[A bird's eye view: Songbirds perceive colour like humans](#)

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