

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

04 July 2019

News

Top stories

[Developing a National Food Strategy: independent review 2019](#)

Independent review to consider the food chain from field to fork. The findings of this review will be used to develop a National Food Strategy for England.

Royal Society of Biology blog

[“Parliament is a stronger body because of the scientists present today.”](#)

It was another packed room for this year’s Parliamentary Links Day, organised by the Royal Society of Biology on behalf of the science and engineering community.

Health and biomedicine

[Too much cleanliness not bad for health, report on hygiene says](#)

Royal Society for Public Health says need to expose children to germs is ‘dangerous myth’

[Hopes raised of cervical cancer eradication](#)

[Number of children eligible for healthy eating schemes falls 20% over three years despite soaring obesity, figures show](#)

‘Today a baby girl born in Liverpool can expect to live 13 fewer years in good health than a baby girl born in Richmond’

[New UK aid support to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria](#)

UK aid has pledged further support to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria to help save millions of lives around the world.

[Wales in danger of missing 2030 target to eradicate Hepatitis C virus](#)

Wales could miss its target of eradicating Hepatitis C by 2030 without urgent action from the Welsh Government, according to the National Assembly's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee.

Food and drink

[Leon restaurant co-founder Henry Dimbleby to lead food system review](#)

[Insects tipped to rival sushi as fashionable food of the future](#)

Analysts believe falling prices and reduced 'yuck factor' will build appetite for bug cuisine

[Baby food industry needs better products and clearer labelling](#)

Public Health England (PHE) publishes an evidence review of commercially available baby foods and drinks aimed at children up to 36 months.

[Give children 'less sugar and more veg in baby food'](#)

[Gove to introduce 'Natasha's Law'](#)

A new law will require food businesses to include full ingredients labelling on pre-packaged foods, Environment Secretary Michael Gove announced today.

Agriculture and fisheries

[Climate Change and Fisheries](#)

Fishing is dependent on marine food webs that are sensitive to overexploitation and climate change. This POSTnote focuses on marine fisheries, including wild capture and farming (aquaculture) of fin- and shellfish, and their processing. It summarises impacts on oceans and fisheries of changes including ocean warming, acidification, deoxygenation, and storms, and explores how fisheries may adapt.

[Ingenious innovations to help transform UK farming](#)

Environment and ecology

[Nature garden takes children on a 'journey of the senses'](#)

Sensory garden demonstrates how schools and gardeners can make outdoor spaces accessible and exciting for all

[Butterfly previously extinct in England bred in forest](#)

Water and air

[UK's largest carbon capture project to prevent equivalent of 22,000 cars' emissions from polluting the atmosphere from 2021](#)

£26 million awarded to accelerate rollout of carbon capture and storage as UK moves to a net zero emissions economy.

Climate and energy

[UN climate talks: Delegates back IPCC report without targets](#)

[PM commits to greener aid spending and sets out bid to host international climate summit in 2020](#)

Prime Minister Theresa May prepares to lead session on climate change in Osaka, stating her belief that “we are the last generation of leaders with the power to limit global warming”

[UK becomes first major economy to pass net zero emissions law](#)

New target will require the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

Waste

[Microplastic pollution and wet wipe ‘reefs’ are changing the River Thames ecosystem](#)

Animal Research

[Proposal to close UK mouse-research centre is ‘major threat’](#)

Country’s mouse-genetics programme is at risk, say researchers at MRC Harwell Institute.

Exiting the EU

[Scotland ‘at risk of losing environmental protection after Brexit’](#)

Campaigners urge Holyrood ministers to enshrine EU legal rights in national law

Research funding and higher education policy

[Horizon Europe needs €120bn, industry advisers say](#)

The EU’s next R&D programme needs a bigger budget than has been proposed, a group of high-level advisers from industry has said in a report that also calls for educational reform.

[Snake oil or panacea: can technology improve student mental health?](#)

Universities are hoping that new technologies will ease rapidly growing demand for student mental health services, but the evidence they work isn’t always there

[Boosted European Universities initiative backs 17 pilot alliances](#)

The European Commission has awarded €85 million to 17 groups of higher education institutions to pilot novel forms of deep collaboration under the EU’s European Universities initiative.

Schools education policy

[Fewer teachers but more pupils: the reality for secondary schools](#)

Profession loses 42,000 teachers as average class size rises for fourth year

["Positive step for LGBT inclusion" as RSHE guidance published](#)

Stonewall and NAHT welcome guidance to help ensure children have the knowledge they need to grow up healthy, happy and safe

[Should pets ever be kept in classrooms?](#)

Animal charities say it's teaching the wrong lessons – but schools argue it inspires children to learn about the natural world

Open access and publication policy

[Learned Societies, the key to realising an open access future?](#)

Diversity and inclusion

[Women lead at half time, but men's salaries overtake them in the long run](#)

Take a longer, deeper view of the variance in men and women going to university.

[Getting serious about the barriers facing disabled students](#)

Imagine attending a university lecture and not being able to follow anything that was said.

[Discrimination drives LGBT scientists to think about quitting](#)

Despite progress, many physical scientists from sexual and gender minorities experience exclusion or harassment at work, finds UK survey.

Digital technologies

[Clear risks of government 'abusing' biometric databases, says commissioner](#)

There are concerns about the way the MoD searched the police national fingerprint database "without an agreed lawful basis".

[New programme to explore how innovation in health data can benefit everyone](#)

Artificial intelligence (AI) and data technologies are transforming research and healthcare. To ensure everyone can benefit from health data innovation, Wellcome is investing £75 million in a five-year programme on data for science and health.

[Virtual reality tool leads new drive to train next generation of health specialists](#)

The tool is one of several innovative projects awarded funding by the Office for Students today.

Measuring impact

[Business gains: NERC investment delivers solutions that enrich the UK economy](#)

Our science delivers positive economic benefits to a wide range of business sectors by providing science-based solutions, enabling smarter regulation, and reducing operational costs.

International news

[Japan whaling: Commercial hunts to resume despite outcry](#)

[The US opioid epidemic is driving a spike in infectious diseases](#)

Researchers around the country are scrambling to understand these outbreaks, but lack solid data on case numbers.

[Plan to sell 50m meals made from electricity, water and air](#)

Solar Foods hopes wheat flour-like product will hit target in supermarkets within two years

[Global pact to stop air pollution](#)

Opinion

[Rise of ethical milk: 'Mums ask when cows and their calves are separated'](#)

As vegan activism boosts awareness of animal welfare issues, more dairy farms let calves stay with their mothers. But is this really any better for the cows?

[NUS president attacks education system as 'institutionally racist' as she steps down](#)

Exclusive: Universities must increase number of black academics and black texts, says Shakira Martin

Other

[UKRI signs San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment](#)

People

[Gove appoints Dimbleby to pioneer 'farm to fork' revolution](#)

Henry Dimbleby has been appointed by Environment Secretary Michael Gove to lead the first major review of the UK food system in nearly 75 years.

Opportunities

Education Policy Assistant (0.4 FTE, 3 year fixed term)

The Royal Society of Biology is seeking a part time Education Policy Assistant to provide administrative support for a coordinated and collaborative approach to education policy. This position involves working closely with the Association for Science Education, Institute of Physics, Royal Society and Royal Society of Chemistry on policy areas covering primary and secondary education in the sciences. For more information and to apply, visit [mySociety](#).

Closes: 08 July 2019

Would you like to contribute to *The Biologist* magazine?

The Biologist is looking to recruit new members to its editorial board, specifically early-career researchers who work in areas including ecology, conservation, whole-organism biology, environmental science and stem-cell biology. Interested candidates

can find more details on the role and how to apply [here](#), or contact Head of Publications [Tom Ireland](#).

Closes: 15 July 2019

Biology Week intern

Led by the Royal Society of Biology, [Biology Week](#) showcases the important and amazing world of the biosciences, getting everyone from children to professional biologists involved in fun and interesting life science activities. We are looking for an intern to help in the run up to, during, and after Biology Week. This internship is well suited to someone looking to gain experience in science communication, event organisation, and press and social media engagement. It is also suited to those with an interest in outreach and engagement and a passion for the biosciences. For further information and to apply, please visit [mySociety](#).

Closes: 17 July 2019

LASA 2019 call for 3Rs speakers

The LASA 3Rs section conveners are inviting submissions for spoken presentations on any aspect of the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement) to be given at the 2019 LASA annual conference, which will be held in Birmingham during the 3Rs session on Wednesday 27 November 2019. Anyone who wishes to contribute, should submit a title and abstract using the submission form available on the [LASA website](#).

Closes: 31 July 2019

[The Nancy Rothwell Award 2019](#)

The Nancy Rothwell Award 2019 specimen drawing competition for 7 – 18 year olds is now open for submissions. Prizes include an experience day at the [Royal Veterinary College](#) for students, and their school can also win £100. Visit the Royal Society of Biology [website](#) for more information.

Closes: 30 July 2019

[RSB Policy Internships](#)

The RSB has two internship positions available for current PhD students who are funded by [AHRC](#), [BBSRC](#), [EPSRC](#), [ESRC](#), [MRC](#), and [NERC](#). Successful applicants will spend three months working at the RSB in Central London in 2020. Start and end dates can be negotiated as appropriate.

Closes: 12 August 2019

[Get creative in this biotechnology photo competition](#)

This MeMBrane photo competition is an opportunity to get creative and take pictures of 'Biotechnology in Action'. Send your pictures to MeMBrane@aston.ac.uk

Closes: 1 September 2019

Royal Society of Biology, Outreach and Engagement Volunteering Opportunities

RSB is looking for local volunteers to help run its hands-on science activities at [Basildon Street Science](#), Basildon, Essex on **13th July 2019**, 10:00 – 16:00; [Lambeth Country Show](#) Brockwell Park, London on **20th – 21st July 2019**; [Ipswich Maritime Festival](#) Ipswich Waterfront, Ipswich, Suffolk on **17th - 18th August 2019**; [Abergavenny Food Festival 2019](#) at Abergavenny, Wales, on **21st – 22nd September 2019**. If you live nearby and are interested in volunteering to help the RSB outreach team deliver hands-on science activities please email Dr Amanda Hardy via outreach@rsb.org.uk

Consultations

[Safeguarding the environment in British Overseas Territories: call for evidence](#)

Closes: 19 July 2019

[Fishing opportunities for 2020 under the common fisheries policy](#)

Closes: 20 August 2019

[Non-elephant ivory trade: call for evidence](#)

Closes: 22 August 2019

[Adding folic acid to flour](#)

Closes: 9 September 2019

Events

[Quantitative Methods in Gene Regulation V](#)

9 - 10 December 2019

Institute of Physics, London

And finally...

[Revealed: The secret life of the spittlebug](#)

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