

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

20 February 2018

News

Top stories

[A Brighter Future for Farming](#)

Secretary of State Michael Gove sets out the direction of travel for our farming industry at the NFU Farming Conference 2018.

Royal Society of Biology news

[RSB responds to recommendation to allocate funds to improving animal health and welfare](#)

The Royal Society of Biology has today responded to recommendations that future farming policy should include allocated funding dedicated to ensuring the improved health and welfare of animals.

[RSB President becomes Swansea University Chancellor](#)

[Thousands of pupils from across the world take part in this year's British Biology Olympiad](#)

A record 7,800 school pupils participated in British Biology Olympiad 2018, with students from over 630 schools taking part.

Health and biomedicine

[Breakthrough as scientists grow sheep embryos containing human cells](#)

Advance brings us closer to growing transplant organs inside animals or being able to genetically tailor compatible organs, say researchers.

[Wales joins the 100,000 Genomes Project – placing rare disease patients at the heart of the genomic medicine revolution](#)

Wales has joined the 100,000 Genomes Project, the Welsh Government announced today.

[WHO warns of soaring rates of measles in Europe](#)

Agriculture and fishery

[Minister questioned on fisheries and agriculture by Committee](#)

The EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee hears from the Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food on the UK's implementation of EU pesticides regulations and on post-Brexit fisheries co-operation.

[Bovine TB strategy review](#)

The government has announced a review of its 25 year Bovine TB strategy.

[Ensure ports have necessary IT structures and customs checks capabilities post-Brexit](#)

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee calls for a fund to prepare British farming for Brexit, a specific impact analysis for each agricultural sector, plans for physical and IT infrastructure to be drawn up now, and for new trading partnerships to be explored.

[Funding to support marine economy](#)

More than £4.8 million shared between businesses.

Environment and ecology

[Pollution blights UK seagrass meadows](#)

[The secret on the ocean floor](#)

Water and air

[UK air pollutants continue decline](#)

[Consumer products' air quality impact 'underestimated'](#)

['Far too many serious pollution incidents' says Environment Agency water quality report](#)

Environment Agency publishes State of the Environment: Water Quality report.

Climate and energy

[Greg Clark MP questioned by Committee](#)

The Economic Affairs Committee hears from the Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to follow up on its report into The Economics of UK Energy Policy.

Waste

[Ocean plastic tide 'violates the law'](#)

Government and parliament

[Brexit Science and Innovation Summit programme announced](#)

The Science and Technology Committee's Brexit Science and Innovation Summit takes place on 22 February 2018, between 9am and 12.30pm.

Research funding and higher education policy

[Prime Minister launches major review of post-18 education](#)

The Prime Minister pledges to look at ways to ensure more people have a genuine choice of high quality technical and academic options.

[Universities set out priorities as higher education review looms](#)

[Government must reconsider high interest rates on student loans](#)

The Government is due to undertake a major review of university funding and student financing. In its unanimously-agreed Report on Student Loans, the Treasury Committee makes a series of recommendations, which the Government should address as part of its review.

[Apprentices should have equivalent support to students, says National Assembly committee](#)

Apprentices in Wales should have similar access to financial support as University students.

Equality and diversity

[4 projects reveal history of health experiences in LGBTQI community](#)

To mark this year's LGBT History Month, Charli Colegate from our Humanities and Social Science team highlights four grants that are exploring the health-related histories of LGBTQI people.

[Science research loses out if the flawed career structure puts people off](#)

In this, my second blog, I'm focusing on the Science Division's second strategic priority – strengthening research capability. And I want to highlight some terrific science.

Public engagement

[Huge global survey to gauge public attitudes to science](#)

Wellcome is funding an ambitious new global study designed to understand how people around the world think and feel about science and key health challenges.

[Raising ocean literacy levels could protect marine environment](#)

International news

[FDA floats new rules for testing Alzheimer's drugs](#)

[Illegal antibiotic combinations threaten efforts to battle antimicrobial resistance](#)

['100,000 orangutans' killed in 16 years](#)

[America's largest scientific society gets tough on Trump](#)

[Trees for Trump: one million plants pledged to offset U-turn on climate change](#)

Environmentalists say forest the size of Kentucky could compensate for 'monumental stupidity' of US withdrawal from Paris climate agreement.

[France to let wolf population grow despite farmers' fears](#)

Opinion

[Priorities for Gyimah \(2/3\): What is the science minister for?](#)

[How to be an academic without working 60 hours a week](#)

A Twitter argument about how many hours academics should work prompted Lucy Foulkes to seek out advice for early career researchers.

[Science, politics and the quest to secure Africa's sustainable food future](#)

Opportunities

[GC offers APA validated postgraduate residential course](#)

The GC Programme organises an annual, fully residential week-long postgraduate course on the analysis and examination of food and feed.

[Chair of the Animals in Science Committee](#)

Do you want to play a key role in advising the government on a range of issues relating to the welfare of animals used in research?

[Early Career Lecturers Survey: Professional and social barriers to success as an early career academic](#)

The [Heads of University Biosciences](#) (HUBS) advisory group, the [Early Career Lecturers' Forum](#), are seeking to identify challenges and priorities for early career lecturers in the biosciences. If you are a recently appointed bioscience lecturer (within the past first five years) in a UK higher education institution, we would like to hear from you.

Consultations

[Call for evidence to help improve air quality launched](#)

Views on domestic burning of dirtier fuels will help inform steps to further improve air pollution. Closes 27 February 2018.

[25-Year Environment Plan: inquiry by the Environmental Audit Committee](#)

The Environmental Audit Committee is conducting a short inquiry into the Government's 25-Year Environment Plan. The RSB response to this consultation is currently in draft. Comments from RSB members on this consultation are welcome - please contact consultation@rsb.org.uk
Closes 28 February 2018.

[Public consultation on EU funds in the area of migration](#)

Closes 8 March 2018.

[BEIS Public Attitudes Tracker review](#)

Closes 18 March 2018

[Public consultation on an EU initiative for pollinators](#)

Closes 5 April 2018.

[Public Consultation on the Establishment of the Innovation Fund](#)

Deadline 10 April 2018.

Events

[Athena SWAN Biosciences Best Practice Workshop](#)

Top tips for those wanting to submit an Athena SWAN application
A free workshop discussing best practice for bioscience departments in higher education institutions to achieve an Athena SWAN award.
7 March 2018.

[PULSE: Programme for Up and coming Life Sciences Entrepreneurs](#)

6 – 8 March 2018.

[Driving Engagement, Innovation and Impact in Plant Science](#)

Through the development of innovative solutions, plant science can help drive productivity and sustainability across the bioeconomy. This interactive workshop will bring together plant scientists, social researchers and innovators to explore novel approaches and learning from other sectors, and thus facilitate more effective co-design, knowledge exchange and public understanding. KTN will also be launching its pre-competitive R&D vision for the agricultural sector at this event.
27 March 2018.

[SEB Florence 2018](#)

Discover the art of creating extraordinary science at SEB's Annual Meeting in Florence, Italy from 3 – 6 July 2018 at the Firenze Fiera Congress and Exhibition Centre.

And finally...

[The Cuttlefish, a Master of Camouflage, Reveals a New Trick](#)

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