

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

18 September 2018

News

Top stories

[Migration Advisory Committee \(MAC\) report: EEA migration](#)

MAC report on the impact of EEA migration in the UK.

[Brexit migration report: 'No preference' for EU workers](#)

Health and biomedicine

[Health Profile for England: the health of England today and into the future](#)

We have now published the first update to our Health Profile for England, a report which gives the most comprehensive picture of the health of the population.

[One month until UK hosts Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit](#)

Health leaders from around the world will gather in London next month to address the issue of mental ill-health.

[Thousands of autistic girls and women 'going undiagnosed' due to gender bias](#)

Number of girls and women with the condition in UK may be vastly underestimated, leading neuroscientist says.

[Vapers rise 'to more than three million' in Britain](#)

Food and drink

[FSA publishes local authority food law enforcement information](#)

The FSA has today published official statistics on food law enforcement by local authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for the year 2017/18. The information provided by local authorities and compiled by the FSA, gives a detailed breakdown of enforcement activity across the three countries.

[Government Chemist supports FSA allergen awareness campaign](#)

Michael Walker, Referee Analyst, will present at the Anaphylaxis Campaign Corporate Conference in September 2018 on regulation of food allergens.

[Industry questions WHO's conviction about health impact of sugar taxes](#)

The industry believes that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has no evidence to back its claim that sugar taxes are an effective way to improve public health. Instead, the industry says, taxes may lead consumers to cheaper brands with similar or even higher calorie content, which may undermine any positive health outcome.

[Campylobacter levels hold steady](#)

Major retailers publish April - June 2018 campylobacter results for fresh shop-bought UK-produced chickens.

['Milk' mania: why most alternatives aren't great – but camel milk just might be](#)

They're better than dairy, but almond, rice, oat, soy and coconut milks are not as environmentally friendly as they seem.

Agriculture and fishery

[Europe's meat and dairy production must halve by 2050, expert warns](#)

Policymakers, farmers and consumers face 'deeply uncomfortable choices', says author of report advising urgent reduction of unsustainable livestock sector.

[UK Government Agriculture Bill - Scotland myth-buster](#)

Agriculture is devolved and will remain devolved, this Bill does not change that.

[New data shows drop in bovine TB as further measures to fight disease unveiled](#)

Fall in new confirmed TB cases in Gloucestershire and Somerset demonstrates progress in delivering 25-year TB Strategy.

[Fisheries Minister updates MPs on "scallop wars"](#)

George Eustice, Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, updated MPs on scallop fishing in the Bay of Seine on Thursday 13 September 2018.

Forestry

[Celebrating 100 years of forestry at the UK's biggest forestry show](#)

Forestry Commission England and Forest Research have joined forces to celebrate 100 years of forestry at the 2018 APF show this September.

Water and air

[£3m support scheme launched to reduce air pollution from farming](#)

A new team of experts officially start today, backed with £3 million of funding to help farmers reduce ammonia emissions from agriculture.

[Ammonia – why the big stink?](#)

Today, the Royal Society and RAND Europe have published an evidence synthesis on ['The impact of ammonia emissions from agriculture on biodiversity'](#).

[UK children inhaling toxic air on school run and in classroom](#)

Tiny particles of black carbon from car exhausts lodge themselves in children's lungs and can enter the bloodstream and potentially the brain.

[Air pollution particles found in mothers' placentas](#)

New research shows direct evidence that toxic air – already strongly linked to harm in unborn babies – travels through mothers' bodies.

Climate and energy

[UK showcases climate change efforts at global summit](#)

Foreign Office Minister Mark Field demonstrates British leadership at major climate change summit.

[Greenhouse gas removal](#)

The 2015 [Paris Agreement](#) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change aimed to pursue efforts to keep temperatures at no more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial times. Meeting these ambitions will require more than just extensive cuts to emissions. It will also require the active removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and their storage, a process called greenhouse gas removal.

Waste

[Fighting coastline pollution](#)

£100,000 for beach clean-ups.

[MEPs vote to turn 'plastic wastelands into fields of gold'](#)

European lawmakers overwhelmingly backed an advisory report on the EU's landmark plastics strategy on Thursday (13 September). It calls on the European Commission to ban certain types of micro-plastics by 2020.

Exiting the EU

[Defra's readiness for a 'no deal' Brexit explored by Committee](#)

The EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee asks Secretary of State Rt Hon Michael Gove MP about the steps his Department has taken to prepare for the possibility of 'no deal' departure from the EU.

Research funding and higher education policy

[How can academics engage with SPICe and the Scottish Parliament?](#)

Relevant, credible, and independent research is essential for good scrutiny and debate. Within the Scottish Parliament, research is used for many purposes including committee work, constituents' enquiries, and preparing for debates.

['Record-breaking' Marie Curie call heightens funding fears](#)

Unprecedented demand for the latest round of mobility-supporting Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions grants has renewed concerns that the programme is underfunded.

[NERC funds National Capability National Public Good awards](#)

NERC has funded six National Capability National Public Good (NC NPG) awards worth a total of £8 million.

Open access and publication policy

[Thousands of scientists publish a paper every five days](#)

To highlight uncertain norms in authorship, John P. A. Ioannidis, Richard Klavans and Kevin W. Boyack identified the most prolific scientists of recent years.

[Europe's academics fail to report results for 90% of clinical trials](#)

But nearly 70% of industry-sponsored trials report their results within a year of ending.

Public Engagement

[Revealed: What the UK public really thinks about the future of science](#)

[New outreach centre launched to help boost wildlife](#)

A landmark outreach centre has officially opened today at Humberhead Peatlands NNR in Yorkshire.

Diversity and inclusion

[External Advisory Group to help shape UKRI's equality, diversity and inclusion agenda](#)

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has announced the appointment of 11 members to a new External Advisory Group for equality, diversity and inclusion.

Ethics

[Labour calls for ban on early foetus gender test](#)

International news

['It's not if, it's when': the deadly pig disease spreading around the world](#)

Swine fever has made its way into China, home to half the world's pigs. Farmers in Estonia are already counting the cost.

[Prickly cactus species 'under threat'](#)

[Pirbright collaboration provides tools for peste des petits ruminants eradication](#)

Scientists from The Pirbright Institute's Vaccine Differentiation group have recently returned from Chennai in India, where they conducted a mass peste des petits ruminants (PPR) vaccination campaign and awareness programme.

[Australia has no climate-change policy — again](#)

Scientists say the country will now struggle to meet its commitments to the Paris agreement.

[Ten years after the economic crash, R&D funding is better than ever](#)

The funding by businesses dipped after the crash, offset in some regions by rises in government funding.

Opinion

[How to turn an environment from hostile to friendly](#)

The UK is falling behind when it comes to attracting students from other countries. Despite a disappointing report from the Migration Advisory Committee, there are steps that can be taken to remedy the situation.

[Roche boss says Brexit and curbs on drug use pose threat to UK science](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - Uncertainty over drug regulation and a reluctance by Britain's health service to use certain pricey modern medicines pose a threat to the country's respected life sciences sector, the head Swiss drugmaker Roche said on Thursday.

Opportunities

[Places of science](#)

Supporting communities to engage with science through museums and their collections.

Closes 26 September 2018.

[Microbiology Society – Policy Manager](#)

The Microbiology Society is seeking an experienced Science Policy Manager to join their Members' Programmes team. Help to drive their growing science policy programme, connecting expert members with government, parliament, research funders and other stakeholders, as they tackle key policy developments and global challenges.

Closes 28 September 2018.

[Announcement of Opportunity: Environmental Evidence for the Future initiative call 2018](#)

NERC is inviting proposals for research projects costing up to £100,000 (100% full economic cost (FEC)) and of up to 12 months' duration under the Environmental Evidence for the Future (EEF) initiative .

Closes 8 October.

[Future Leaders Fellowships](#)

The UK Research and Innovation Future Leaders Fellowships (FLF) will grow the strong supply of talented individuals needed to ensure that UK research and innovation continues to be world class.

Closes 10 October 2018.

[BSI mentoring scheme launch](#)

12-15 early career scientists will be paired up with experienced immunologists from different host institutions. Over a 12 month period, mentors and mentees will hold a series of meetings that can be used to discuss career development, barriers faced at work and overcoming tough work situations.

Closes 21 October 2018.

[Diversity in Science Grants](#)

The Biochemical Society's Diversity in Science Grants scheme provides grants of up to £500 to support and address issues relating to diversity in science.

Closes 31 October 2018.

Consultations

[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. 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 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.

[Public consultation for the evaluation of the EU drug precursors regulations](#)

Closes 2 November 2018.

[Farmers, growers and processors asked for views on AHDB](#)

A 10-week exercise is seeking views on the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB).
Closes 9 November 2018.

[Public asked for views on banning energy drink sales to children](#)

The consultation is part of the government's plan to reduce childhood obesity and other health problems in children.
Closes 21 November 2018.

Events

[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.

[Biology Week: Bioscience for All - Paving Pathways for Diversity](#)

8 October 2018, London

A free Policy Lates event discussing ways to best support an inclusive and accessible environment, across the biosciences. Hear from innovators who are developing ways to improve access and support for people from diverse backgrounds to study and work in the biosciences. Learn about the benefits they've created for people from a range of backgrounds, communities and experiences. Understand the challenges they've faced and how they've overcome them. Discuss the still outstanding opportunities for broadening access and deepening support so people can thrive, and give back to society, through a career in the biosciences.

[Biology Week: Artificial Intelligence - can AI save the world?](#)

9 October 2018, London

Find out about the science of artificial intelligence from a panel of experts.

[Research culture: Changing expectations](#)

29 - 30 October, Royal Society, London

Research culture: changing expectations will bring together intertwined debates around research assessment, career progression, researcher development, research dissemination and research integrity. This conference will showcase initiatives and work across the research landscape to continue to create and improve the cultural conditions and environments in which excellent research and researchers can flourish.

And finally...

[They're Blue, Pink and Purple, and No One Has Ever Seen Them Before](#)

Deep in the Atacama Trench off the coast of Chile, researchers discovered three new species of snailfish.

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