

POLICY

Nuclear restart

Japanese regulators have granted the first permit to restart a nuclear reactor following the Fukushima disaster in 2011. Issued by the country's Nuclear Regulation Authority on 27 May, the permit will allow the Kyushu Electric Power Company in Fukuoka to restart two reactors at the Sendai Nuclear Power Plant, with the first coming online as early as July. Japan halted its 43 operable nuclear reactors in September 2013, pending a safety review by the regulators. The Japanese government is currently considering a draft energy plan, which projects that nuclear power could account for up to 22% of the nation's electricity by 2030.

Reef unlisted

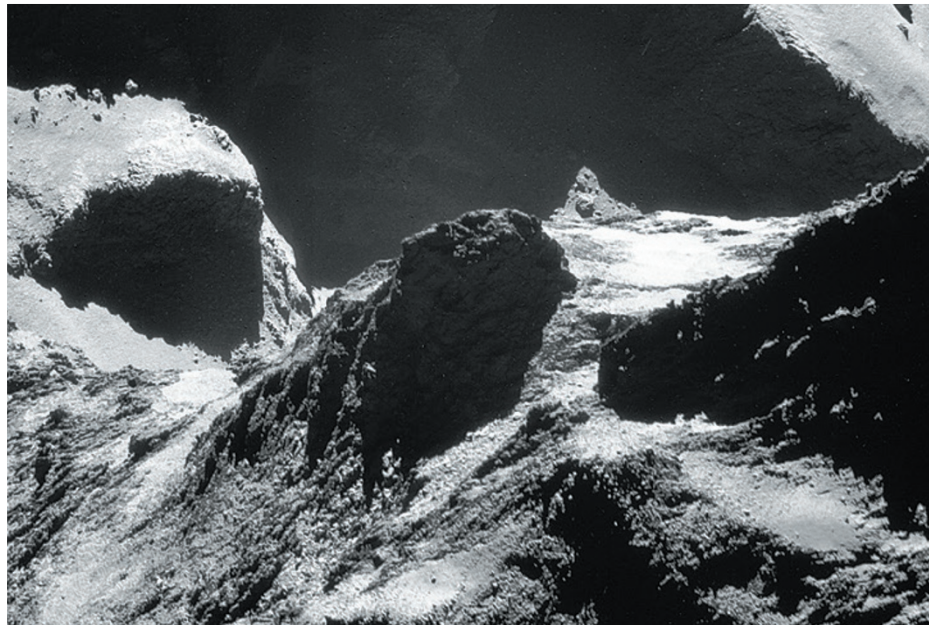
Australia's Great Barrier Reef has not been put on the United Nations' list of heritage sites that are in danger — to the consternation of conservationists. A draft document released by the UN on 29 May instead advises the World Heritage Committee, which decides on the list, to welcome progress made by Australia in protecting the reef. It also advises regular checks to ensure

NUMBER CRUNCH

14.9 m

The number of new cancer cases globally in 2013, according to a study published on 28 May.

Global Burden of Disease Cancer Collaboration *JAMA Oncol.* <http://doi.org/4w4> (2015).



ESA/ROSETTA/NAVCAM

Rosetta zooms in on heart of comet

This craggy landscape might look like an Alpine peak, but it is actually the nucleus of comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko, the target of the European Space Agency's Rosetta spacecraft. Almost 1,800 images taken by the probe's navigation camera from as little as 8 kilometres above the comet's surface were released by the

Rosetta team on 28 May. They were taken just before and after the Philae lander touched down on the comet in November last year. This image captures an area spanning 785 metres across the neck of the rubber-duck-shaped comet. Rosetta continues to orbit the comet as it heads for its closest approach to the Sun in August.

that the country's 35-year sustainability plan for the reef is working. The reef's status will be finalized at the committee's meeting in Bonn, Germany, at the end of this month.

China ivory trade

Conservationists welcomed news that China plans to phase out its legal ivory trade. In a symbolic gesture, about 680 kilograms of confiscated illegal ivory were destroyed in Beijing on 29 May. At the event, Zhao Shucong, head of the Chinese State Forestry Administration, declared that China "will strictly control ivory processing and trade until the commercial

processing and sale of ivory and its products are eventually halted."

EVENTS

US anthrax blunder

The US Department of Defense announced on 27 May that it had accidentally shipped live anthrax spores to labs in nine US states and a US military base in South Korea. The facilities that received the samples did not have systems in place to protect employees against anthrax exposure because they were expecting to receive killed spores. It is unclear how many people were exposed. Some workers are now receiving

preventive treatment. The incident follows a series of biosafety lapses last summer at US government agencies. See go.nature.com/dc2anv for more.

Antelope die-off

Almost half of the global population of saiga antelopes has been killed off in just a few weeks. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) said on 28 May that more than 120,000 of the critically endangered animals (*Saiga tatarica*) have died in the Betpak-Dala area of central Kazakhstan. Four main populations of saigas live in Kazakhstan and Russia, and a 2014 census reported

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that about 262,000 animals live worldwide. UNEP says that a preliminary analysis suggests that both biological and environmental factors may have caused the die-off. See go.nature.com/nkqc81 for more.

AWARDS

Shaw prizes

The three US\$1-million prizes from the Shaw Prize Foundation were announced in Hong Kong on 1 June. William Borucki of NASA's Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California, received the astronomy prize for leading the Kepler exoplanet-hunting mission. Microbiologists Bonnie Bassler of Princeton University in New Jersey and Peter Greenberg of the University of Washington in Seattle shared the biology prize for their discovery of bacterial communication, or 'quorum sensing'. Gerd Faltings of the University of Bonn in Germany and Henryk Iwaniec of Rutgers University in New Jersey shared the mathematics prize for their breakthroughs in number theory.

PEOPLE

Oxford head

Political scientist Louise Richardson (pictured) looks set to become the



next vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford, UK, having been nominated for the role on 28 May. Richardson, whose research covers terrorism and security issues, will be the first woman to head the university in its more than 800-year history. If her appointment is approved by the university's decision-making body, known as Congregation, Richardson will take over from current vice-chancellor Andrew Hamilton on 1 January 2016. She has held leadership positions at the University of St Andrews, UK, and Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

FUNDING

Funds ring-fenced

Three basic-research funding programmes have been sheltered from a controversial budget raid on the European Union (EU) Horizon 2020 funding framework. The siphoned money — which

now stands at €2.2 billion (US\$ 2.4 billion) instead of €2.7 billion — will establish the European Fund for Strategic Investments. The European Parliament, Council and Commission agreed on 28 May to ring-fence the budgets of the European Research Council, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie research fellowship and a programme that supports researchers in low-income EU countries. The agreement must be ratified by the European Parliament on 24 June.

FACILITIES

Hawaii compromise

At least one-quarter of the 13 telescopes atop Hawaii's sacred mountain Mauna Kea must be removed by the time the planned Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) begins operating there next decade, Hawaiian governor David Ige said on 26 May. Construction of the TMT halted in early April when protestors blocked the road to the mountain's summit. The governor also said that the University of Hawaii at Manoa, which leases the land on which the telescopes sit, must provide cultural training for Mauna Kea visitors and promise that this will be the last telescope to be built at the site. See page 15 and go.nature.com/ufodat for more.

COMING UP

6-9 JUNE

The latest developments in human and medical genetics will be discussed at the European Human Genetics Conference in Glasgow, UK. go.nature.com/tnjqh

6-13 JUNE

Delegates from United Nations member states meet in Rome for the Food and Agricultural Organization's annual conference. Topics include addressing poverty, food security and climate-change impacts. go.nature.com/aniorh

7-11 JUNE

Scientists gather in San Antonio, Texas, for the American Nuclear Society's annual meeting. This year's theme is 'Nuclear technology: an essential part of the solution.' go.nature.com/lna2dk

X-ray upgrade

The European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF) in Grenoble, France, began a major upgrade on 29 May. Already the world's most intense X-ray source, the ESRF is investing €150 million (US\$165 million) in a new accelerator that will deliver even more tightly focused beams, creating X-rays that are 100 times brighter. Installing the new machine in the ESRF's present tunnels will entail a 17-month shutdown starting at the end of 2018. The upgraded source should allow researchers to image materials and observe chemical reactions at the nanometre scale.

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SOURCE: FAO

TREND WATCH

The number of undernourished people worldwide has fallen to 795 million people, down from 1 billion in the early 1990s, according to a report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Economic growth and social policies — which promote better nutrition, health care and education — have helped to beat hunger in many developing regions. There has been little progress in southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where political instability has led to food insecurity.

GLOBAL HUNGER

The number of undernourished people has fallen by about one-fifth globally, but progress differs between regions.

