

naturejobs

**THE CAREERS
MAGAZINE FOR
SCIENTISTS**

Last week *Nature* published a series of Commentaries discussing how science should react to the recession (see www.nature.com/recessionwatch). Prominent thinkers, policy-makers and scientists weighed in with incisive analyses about changes to science institutions, government programmes and economic tools that could help recovery. Within these forward-thinking treatises are potentially important tips for the individual scientist and his or her career.

Jeffrey Sachs, the director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University in New York, calls on the G20 countries to support sustainable energy in the poorest countries. This would be a “triple win” writes Sachs — a stimulus for richer countries, development for the poor countries, and environmental sustainability that would benefit everyone. Scientists should look to these initiatives as possible job generators.

Governments, such as that of Japan, should guard against becoming too insular with scientific funding and education, according to Atsushi Sunami and Kiyoshi Kurokawa, professors at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in Tokyo. Nations, as well as individual scientists, need insights from abroad to battle mammoth issues, such as climate change and health.

For those in the corporate world, Noreena Hertz, a visiting professor of globalization at Erasmus University, the Netherlands, had a message: cooperate. Economic crises, such as the Great Depression, have fuelled cultural shifts towards social justice and communitarian values. During the current crisis companies should, therefore, become more proactive about advocating community projects devoted to the public good. Scientists working in industry or on start-ups should understand that public perception matters more than ever.

But regardless of scientists’ career-track preferences, they must be willing to advocate for more investment in science and science education, according to UK member of parliament Ian Taylor. Too often, writes Taylor, scientists eschew advocacy and assume that the justification for support is self-evident. In this economic climate, that could be an egregious error.

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