

SEVEN DAYS

The news in brief

SPACE

JUNO trouble

A computer glitch interrupted communication with NASA's Juno spacecraft on 18 October. The probe entered into 'safe mode' about 13 hours before the closest approach to Jupiter in its second fly-by, but remained safely in its 53.4-day orbit around the giant planet. Juno, which has slipped into its temporary shut-down mode several times since its launch in 2011, aims to shed light on Jupiter's origin, atmosphere and core. As *Nature* went to press, engineers were still trying to restore communications.

Mars lander site

A NASA spacecraft may have spotted the remains of Schiaparelli, the European Space Agency's (ESA's) missing Mars lander. Two new features on the red planet's surface in images taken by the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter are probably signs of Schiaparelli, ESA announced on 21 October. The lander was part of a joint European–Russian mission that reached Mars on 19 October. The first portion, the Trace Gas Orbiter, successfully entered orbit around the planet, while the lander began its descent to the surface. But towards the end of its six-minute landing procedure, Schiaparelli's signal cut out and the craft has not been heard from since. A successful landing on Mars would have been a first for the agency. See pages 427 and 435 for more.

POLICY

NSF pay rule

The US National Science Foundation announced on 21 October that universities must now pay 10% of the salaries of faculty members who work with the agency to



FERENC ISZA/AFP/GETTY

Hungary premier splits science academy

Five foreign members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS) have resigned in protest at what they consider to be antidemocratic actions by the populist government of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán (pictured) — and the academy's failure to confront them. The protest was prompted by the closure this month of the country's largest quality newspaper, *Népszabadság*, which had been critical of the government. On 19 October, the five, including

Nobel-prizewinning neuroscientist Torsten Wiesel, published an open letter inviting other external members to resign and calling on the academy to "raise its voice in defence of freedom and justice in Hungary". More than 150 academicians and HAS scientists published an open letter to academy president László Lovász on 14 October asking him to launch scholarly debates on the issues. He responded that the academy is not a political organization.

manage research programmes. The agency employs nearly 200 university researchers per year on a temporary basis, with the goal of learning from working scientists in different fields. Under a limited budget, the agency is aiming to reduce costs with the policy change, which also includes ending reimbursements for faculty members who miss out on consulting opportunities while working for the federal government.

Kuwait DNA law

Kuwait will scale back a controversial law that would have mandated the

compulsory collection of DNA information from residents and visitors. The government had said that the data could be used to fight terrorism, but the law, passed in July 2015, faced widespread backlash from scientists and human-rights groups, as well as a legal challenge from a Kuwaiti law firm in September on constitutional grounds. On 19 October, Kuwait's emir requested a review of the law. According to Kuwaiti lawyer Adel Abdulhadi, whose firm brought the challenge, the law will not be implemented in its current form and is likely to

be amended so that it applies only to accused or convicted criminals.

EVENTS

UN urban agenda

Delegates from 167 countries agreed on 20 October to promote sustainable urban development at the United Nations' Habitat III conference in Quito, Ecuador. Attendees adopted the New Urban Agenda, a non-binding document that sets broad goals to promote cleaner, healthier and more socially inclusive cities. It includes a call for universal

access to modern energy services and a commitment to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions. However, scientific organizations such as Future Earth and the International Council for Science argue that the agreement lacks urgency, and call for an agenda that brings scientists on board and aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Europe's trial data

The European Medicines Agency (EMA), based in London, has started publishing details of the full clinical-trial data that it receives from drug companies. On 20 October, the agency published around 100 clinical reports (roughly 260,000 pages) about two EMA-approved medicines (carfilzomib, a cancer drug, and lesinurad, a gout treatment). The disclosures make the EMA the first major drug regulatory agency to publish the full results of clinical investigations that drug developers submit when they apply for the agency's approval to market medicines. See page 440 for more.

Glaciologist dies

A US glaciologist died on a research trip in Antarctica on 22 October when the snowmobile he was riding fell into a crevasse. Gordon Hamilton (pictured) of



the University of Maine in Orono had been working in a heavily crevassed area near the main US base, McMurdo Station, where the Ross and McMurdo ice shelves meet. Hamilton, who was 50, studied the stability of ice sheets and their larger role in the climate system, including sea-level rise.

Species threat

A court of appeal in the United States ruled on 24 October that federal agencies can rely on projections of future climate change to determine whether a species is threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The state of Alaska, several oil associations and groups representing Alaska's indigenous people had claimed that a subspecies of the Pacific bearded seal (*Erignathus barbatus nauticus*) should not be protected by the act, because the animals were not yet in danger and climate predictions

were conjecture. But the court rejected this, citing a climate projection that calculated that sea-ice loss would leave the species endangered by 2095.

FACILITIES

Nike funds science

Phil Knight, co-founder of sports-clothing giant Nike, and his wife Penny announced on 17 October that they will give US\$500 million to the University of Oregon in Eugene to create a Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact. The centre will host dozens of scientists and hundreds of students and postdocs. The Knights' philanthropic support is the first part of what the university hopes will be a \$1-billion initiative focused on turning scientific discoveries into innovations. The gift is the among largest ever to a public US university. Phil Knight graduated from Oregon in 1959.

Gene-drive centre

An Indian philanthropic organization has awarded US\$70 million to a California university to develop genetic tools for mosquito control. The gift from Tata Trusts in Mumbai, announced on 23 October, will fund the creation of the Tata Institute for Genetics and Society at the University of California, San Diego. The institute

COMING UP

4 NOVEMBER

The Paris climate deal enters into legal force.

7–18 NOVEMBER

Delegates gather in Marrakesh, Morocco, for the United Nations COP22 climate summit and the first meeting of the parties to the Paris climate agreement.

go.nature.com/2dtfo9v

12–16 NOVEMBER

The 46th annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience takes place in San Diego, California.

go.nature.com/2el6nup

plans to develop gene-drive technologies — which can rapidly propagate a mutation through a population — to control malaria-carrying mosquitoes and improve crops, among other applications.

AWARDS

Statistics prize

Five statistical associations have created a prize in the hope of capturing broader recognition for their field. The inaugural US\$75,000 International Prize in Statistics, announced on 19 October, was awarded to statistician David Cox at the University of Oxford, UK, for the 'proportional hazards model', which is widely used to identify risk factors and evaluate treatments across medical research. "Most people don't have the slightest idea what statisticians do or why it matters," says Ron Wasserstein, head of the American Statistical Association in Alexandria, Virginia. He hopes that the prize will encourage scientists to forge deeper collaborations with statisticians.

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TREND WATCH

The average atmospheric level of carbon dioxide reached the symbolic threshold of 400 parts per million (p.p.m.) in 2015, noted an annual report on 24 October. CO₂ levels have crossed the threshold in certain months, but a global annual average has never done so in recorded history. The increase from 2014 was spurred by a strong El Niño event, which reduced CO₂ uptake by natural vegetation because of drought. Preliminary data suggest that global CO₂ may permanently top 400 p.p.m. in 2016.

ATMOSPHERIC CO₂ PASSES SYMBOLIC THRESHOLD

Last year's powerful El Niño warming event helped to push the growth in atmospheric carbon dioxide levels in 2014–15 above the average for the past ten years, according to the World Meteorological Organization.

