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Australia performs strongly in earth and environmental sciences

PRESS RELEASE FROM NATURE PUBLISHING GROUP

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Australia retains third place in a dynamic Asia-Pacific region, with its greatest strengths still in earth and environmental sciences, according to the Nature Publishing Index 2013 Asia-Pacific released today as a supplement to *Nature* available [here](#).

The country improved its NPI score by almost every measure, with the second highest level of international collaboration in the region. Its contribution to *Nature* journals grew by more than 50% in 2013.

In the life sciences, Australia ranks third in the NPI Asia-Pacific behind China and Japan. However, it is persistently strong in immunology. Four of the top five regional institutions contributing to Nature Immunology were Australian.

The University of Melbourne held top spot in Australia for the third consecutive year, followed by Australian National University (ANU) and the University of Queensland (UQ) in second and third places, respectively—the same positions as 2012.

Australia recorded 29 institutions in the Asia-Pacific Top 200, with the University of Melbourne coming in at number eight.

Those that also came in the NPI Asia-Pacific top 10 institutions include:

- the University of New South Wales (UNSW)—this year's rising star. It comes in fourth place, up from eighth, with contributions including those from two winners in the 2013 Prime Minister's Prizes for Science Awards, quantum computer scientist Andrea Morello and plant ecologist Angela Moles
- the University of Sydney in fifth place, which dropped one place despite its increased output
- Monash University up one spot to sixth place, with a high proportion (three-quarters) of its papers involving co-authors from international institutions
- CSIRO which dropped to seventh from fifth despite increased output. CSIRO was the top Asia-Pacific contributor to Nature Climate Change, with 12 papers that included subjects such as climate change models and the effects of a changing climate on species distribution
- the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for Medical Research (WEHI), back in the top 10 with eighth place and a 250% increase in output over the year
- the University of Western Australia (UWA), which retained its ninth spot with two high-scoring climate change papers, among others
- Macquarie University, which joined the top group in tenth place. Macquarie is notable for all of its collaborative publications with international institutions.

Overall, Australia earned about one third of its NPI output from papers in the earth and environmental field, led by CSIRO, ANU and UQ.

The University of Western Australia and James Cook University, which both dropped out of the top 10, joined CSIRO and UQ in the top five contributors to *Nature Climate Change*.

The big movers this year among Australian institutions were WEHI (up to 33 from 68) and the two that just missed Australia's top 10: Swinburne University of Technology (up to 64 from 100) and the University of Adelaide (up to 66 from 125).

The Nature Publishing Index 2013 Asia-Pacific has been released as a supplement to *Nature* today. It measures the output of research articles from nations and institutes published in the 18 Nature-branded primary research journals over the calendar year to provide a snapshot of research in the Asia-Pacific in 2013. To see the latest results for the region, and the Nature Publishing Index Global Top 100, visit the Index website at www.natureasia.com/en/publishing-index/. The data posted on the website is updated every week with a moving window of 12 months of data.

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Notes on the Nature Publishing Index

The Nature Publishing Index (NPI) results should be used with some caveats. It is based only on the publication output in Nature and the 17 Nature research journals. So while it offers a broad coverage of basic research in the life sciences, physical and chemical sciences, the attention to applied sciences, engineering and clinical medicine is relatively limited. The NPI should be used primarily as an indicator of strength in high quality basic research. It does not weight multiple factors in the way that other rankings do, such as the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities or the Times Higher Education World

University Rankings.

The output of an institution or country obviously depends on its size. Some institutions have very large numbers of researchers that help drive up their rankings. So it is important to take into account the numbers of researchers in an institution or country when interpreting the results.

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