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China and Japan battle for science lead in dynamic Asia-Pacific region

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Contact: Alex Jackson
Corporate Public Relations, Nature Publishing Group
T: +44 (0)20 7843 4850
Alex.Jackson@nature.com

China and Japan continue to battle for the Asia-Pacific science crown as the region also boosts its contribution to global science, according to the Nature Publishing Index (NPI) 2013 Asia Pacific published today as a supplement to *Nature* available [here](#).

Researchers from the Asia-Pacific contributed 31% (1,371) of papers in the 18 Nature-branded research journals in 2013, up from 28% (1,009) in 2012. Supplement editors say 'the region will continue to be an engine of growth for quality research output for years to come.'

Last year, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) took the lead for the first time in NPI Asia-Pacific institutional rankings, knocking the traditional leader, the University of Tokyo, off its perch. China accomplished much in 2013, leading the region in chemistry.

2013 was also the first year that scientists working in China published more papers in Nature research journals than scientists from any other Asia-Pacific nation. Despite this growth from China, which the supplement editors say is 'on pace to take over as the top Asia-Pacific contributor to the NPI in the next two or three years', Japan still leads the region, when the publication figures are corrected for authors' affiliations.

Japan, which is overcoming the impacts of the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, with the help of a US\$1.8 billion science stimulus package, continues to lead the NPI Asia-Pacific in physics, life sciences and earth and environmental sciences.

Australia consolidates third place with strong performance in climate change and immunology research. The top Australian institutions continue to climb up the world rankings with three in the regional top 20; the University of Melbourne, the Australian National University, and the University of Queensland.

South Korea, the fourth most productive nation, increased its 2013 NPI output following a quiet 2012. Named a possible 'one to watch' by the supplement editors, with high levels of investment in science and technology announced by both government and private enterprise, its output is growing faster than China's.

Singapore is singled out by the editors for having the fastest growth rate in science of any country in the region. Fifth placed, Singapore's multi-billion dollar research and development investment programme has been steadily growing over the past decade and its NPI output almost doubled in 2013. Having catapulted its first institution, the National University of Singapore (NUS), into the Global Top 11 in 2012, Singapore boosted its presence this year with the addition of Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

Taiwan, India and New Zealand retain their sixth to eighth places for a third year, each showing substantial growth in their NPI output.

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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