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### China's star ascendant as Academy tops Asia-Pacific rankings

PRESS RELEASE FROM NATURE PUBLISHING GROUP

27 March 2014

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China is on track to become the dominant scientific power in Asia-Pacific, according to the editors of the Nature Publishing Index (NPI) 2013 Asia-Pacific published today as a supplement to *Nature* available [here](#).

Supplement editors predict China is 'on pace to take over as the top Asia-Pacific contributor to the NPI in the next two or three years'. The country has accomplished much in 2013, with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) knocking the University of Tokyo off the top of the NPI institutional rankings for the first time. Chinese scientists also lead the way in publishing more papers in *Nature* journals than Japan or any other Asia-Pacific nation. It is also the regional leader in Chemistry.

Despite Chinese growth, Japan still leads the region when the publication figures are corrected for authors' affiliations. However, China is narrowing the gap and at this rate could potentially overtake Japan in 2014.

CAS, a national research organisation comprising over 100 research centres, topped the Asia-Pacific region in each subject area: chemistry, physical sciences, life sciences, and earth and environmental sciences. Both the Institute of Physics (17%) and the Shanghai Institute of Biological Sciences (13%) make the greatest contribution to CAS's NPI output. In 2013, CAS ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in the Global Top 100, up from 14<sup>th</sup> in 2012 and 23<sup>rd</sup> in 2011.

Alongside CAS's growth, nine of the top 10 Chinese research institutions in 2013 also increased their NPI output this year.

The top Chinese research institutions are:

- the Chinese Academy of Sciences
- the University of Science and Technology of China in second place for the third consecutive year, with strengths in the physical sciences and chemistry
- Tsinghua University and Peking University, which retained third and fourth places, respectively
- genomics company BGI, in fifth place and up from sixth. BGI has grown more than other any Chinese institution proportional to its 2009 baseline
- Nanjing University, which joined the top 10 in sixth place with a more than three-fold output increase in 2013. Its contributions to Nature Physics topped the region
- Fudan University, up two places to seventh
- Zhejiang University, which dropped one place to eighth, despite a slight increase in output
- Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU), which dropped from fifth to ninth with a reduced output in 2013. SJTU's collaboration efforts are showing results; however, the vast majority of its papers are being published in collaboration with international scientists.
- the University of Hong Kong, which retained its tenth spot.

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/](http://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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