

# Concerned Scientists' Weekly News Bulletin [December 6, 2021]



*Our weekly bulletin collects and digests news of the past week.  
Contributions welcome.*

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## **NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES**

*Chemistry World:* [World comes together to back UNESCO's vision of open science](#)

The first universal definition of "open science" has been agreed by 193 countries under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) umbrella. They have also agreed to abide by common standards and adopted a roadmap to guide future developments. The agreed definition makes reproducibility, transparency, sharing and collaboration core principles of science.

*The New York Times:* [Trust in science and scientists increased globally, poll finds](#)

Results from the public opinion poll, in a report published by the Wellcome Trust, a foundation focused on health research in London, showed that about 80 percent of people from 113 countries said they trusted science either "a lot" or "some." About three-fourths of the 119,000 surveyed said they trusted scientists, either "a lot" or "some."

*The Guardian:* [Renewable energy has "another record year of growth," says International Energy Agency](#)

About 290GW of new renewable energy generation capacity, mostly in the form of wind turbines and solar panels, has been installed around the world this year, beating the previous record last year. On current trends, renewable energy generating capacity will exceed that of fossil fuels and nuclear energy combined by 2026.

*AgClips:* [USDA invests \\$633M in climate-smart and resilient infrastructure](#)

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the Department is investing \$633 million to reduce the impacts of climate change on rural communities. With the enactment of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and as part of the broader Build Back Better agenda, the Biden-Harris Administration has made investing in rural communities a top priority.

*The Washington Post:* [Lawmakers demand oil and gas firms divulge methane leak data](#)

The House Science Committee has notified the chief executives of 10 major oil companies that they must disclose more data about their emissions of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, in one of America's biggest oil and gas producing regions.

*The Hill:* [US must cut plastic production to save oceans, report says](#)

The United States must act to curb plastic waste in oceans by developing a comprehensive national strategy that includes reducing plastic production, a new report from the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) has determined. While only 4.3 percent of Earth's population resides in the U.S., the country was the world's "top generator of plastic waste" in 2016 and exceeded that of all European nations combined – generating a total of 42 million metric tons of such waste that year.

*PLOS* blog: [Study finds COVID-19 research freely accessible, but research data sharing and preprinting are low](#)

Levels of COVID-19 research data sharing have remained low during the pandemic, and preprinting of research on the virus has been lower than two initiatives tried to ensure it would be. This is according to a new report that examines the effectiveness of initiatives taken by players in the research ecosystem to promote sharing of COVID-19 research by stepping up open science approaches.

*Science/Business:* [What Germany's new government means for research and innovation](#)

Research leaders have welcomed the raft of promises, but are uncertain if economist Bettina Stark-Watzinger, the surprise pick for education and research minister, and a former research manager herself, will have the time or money to implement what is promised. After years of deliberation, Germany will get a federal technology transfer agency, to be named the German Agency for Transfer and Innovation (DATI).

## **REGIONAL NEWS**

*Indiana Environmental Reporter:* [Citizens Action Coalition requests the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission reject CenterPoint Electric plan](#)

Citizens Action Coalition, alongside environmental law nonprofit Earthjustice, has requested that the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission reject CenterPoint Energy's recent motion to charge electric customers at least \$23 a month to pay for two new fossil gas-fired power plants and a new gas pipeline.

*Indiana Environmental Reporter:* [Preliminary state PFAS testing detects toxic "forever chemicals" in some Indiana community water systems](#)

Limited preliminary results suggest that water in Indiana American Water's Charlestown Water System in Clark County, Morgan County Rural Water Corp, Hartford City Water Works in Blackford County and Aurora Utilities in Dearborn County is contaminated with PFAS. The results are the first released by IDEM during the first phase of its PFAS community water system sampling project.

*The Herald-Times:* [Patients to be moved to new IU Health Bloomington Hospital early Sunday; old ER will close](#)

On Sunday, IU Health began transferring patients from their old location on West Second Street to the new site on Bloomington's northeast side. The new hospital features large private rooms, acuity adaptability, a larger emergency department, and nearly 1,800 parking spaces.

*Indiana Public Media:* [Internal documents: 1 in 12 IU Health employees exempt from vaccine requirement, reveals statewide variation](#)

Across Indiana, the chance of receiving an exemption depends more on one's employer than the quality of the request. While many employees working for the state's largest health system are fully vaccinated, sources say the health system has been far more accommodating to exemption requests than other central Indiana health systems.

*Indiana Department of Health:* [New resource available for Hoosiers with questions about Covid-19 treatment](#)

Hoosiers seeking to learn about where to receive the monoclonal antibodies that have been used to prevent progression of COVID-19 disease can contact 211 to reach Crush COVID, a support center managed by KPMG LLP.

## **OPINION AND ANALYSIS**

*Atlantic:* [Climate advocates are gambling with fate](#)

Over the past few years, climate advocates have gained two atypical allies, corporate America, especially in the tech and finance sectors, and, drawn to the cause more recently, the China hawks. Since President Joe Biden took office, climate policy has become linked to anti-China policy and North Atlantic security policy more broadly. Although there have been hints of this for a while—the Defense Department first identified climate change as a “threat multiplier” in 2014—it has burst into new prominence with this White House.

*Popular Science:* [4 new myths about climate change—and how to debunk them](#)

Although some politicians continue to traffic in climate denial, even corporations realize it will alienate most of their consumers. Climate change denial now comes in a variety of embellished, truthful-sounding opinions—but they're just as mythical as the idea that climate change is a hoax. The article discusses three examples of those altered arguments.

*NRDC:* [Giving birds a fighting chance](#)

In addition to revoking the previous administration's unlawful reinterpretation of the century-old Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) has initiated two rulemakings to improve avian conservation efforts: one targeted at eagle conservation and the other impacting more than 1,000 species, ranging from backyard birds to the most imperiled birds.

## **TAKE ACTION AND RESOURCES FOR ACTIVISTS**

*Day One Project:* [Explore and submit proposals](#)

The Federation of American Scientists' Day One Project is dedicated to democratizing the policymaking process by working with new and expert voices across the science and technology community, helping to develop actionable policies that can improve the lives of all Americans. Share your idea for policy change by completing the online form.

*The CSIU Weekly News Bulletin is now available on the web. To view this page online go to <https://csiub.org/weekly-news-bulletins>. To view archives of past bulletins, see <https://csiub.org/bulletin-archives>.*

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