

might also shed light on other biological effects of severe aerosol loading.

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#### Science Funding in Argentina

In Argentina, the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET) is responsible, together with the universities, for most of the research conducted in different areas of knowledge. A critical problem faced by these institutions is the lack of appropriate funding. As a result, admission to CONICET has been closed since 1993. This situation has caused much uncertainty for Argentinian scientists both in and outside the country. Last October, the new authorities of CONICET offered 160 new openings for academic positions. It was stated that the selection would be made according to the academic excellence of the applicants and their projects and that an equitable distri-

bution among areas of knowledge and regions of the country would also be considered. However, when the results of the selection were made public in April, it was clear that the academic excellence of the applicants had not been the main criterion of selection. This caused much frustration to many highly qualified scientists, who are now obliged to emigrate or remain abroad if they want to stay in the scientific system. Questions are thus raised about what kind of scientific system Argentina is choosing for its future.

In countries that support strong scientific systems, academic excellence has always been the main criterion applied in candidate selection. With this as a main goal, they then have established other ways to develop a more even distribution of resources across the country. The support of a scientific system of high quality is essential for undeveloped countries like Argentina. Actions like those taken by CONICET will clearly have the opposite effect.

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