dence into a consistent picture of Japanese origins, which is presumed to rest on two distinct waves of migrants, "could set an example for [work on] other regions" with more complex migratory patterns.

–DENNIS NORMILE

SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT

Chinese Journals Pledge Crackdown

BEIJING—Chinese journals and scientific societies have embraced a new code of conduct designed to reduce the incidence of plagiarism, fabrication, and other acts of misconduct. The policies, adopted last month at a national meeting here, are meant to alert editors and authors to a problem that Chinese authorities see as a threat to their rising investment in research.

The campaign, organized by the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), is the most visible to date on this sensitive topic (*Science*, 18 October 1996, p. 337). Two 1997 cases, involving duplicate publication of research from its magazines, prompted the association's Committee of Morality and Rights of Science and Technology Researchers to convene a meeting of representatives from several hundred scientific societies and journals. On 1 February the group endorsed a seven-part "Moral Convention."

The one-page statement asks journal editors to refrain from publishing poor-quality, "from-a-buddy" articles, to reject articles of questionable authorship, and to weed out multiple submissions. It suggests that authors found to have committed plagiarism, fabrication, or falsification of data be warned in writing, followed by a boycott of future articles, notification of their home institution, and public disclosure of their misdeeds. CAST is also thinking about asking all journals signing the convention to reject any articles for up to 10 years from authors found guilty of misconduct, and to make their names public.

In addition to recommending ways to stamp out misconduct, the convention also affirms the role of authors and seeks to promote better communications between journals and the scientific community. It asks journals to notify authors of the status of their submissions within a reasonable period of time and to respect their "rights and interests."

Chinese journals and science officials have long been concerned about scientific misconduct, especially plagiarism, but the two 1997 incidents brought the issue to a head. In one case, an associate professor at the Higher Education Research Center of Nanjing Teachers' University copied an entire article on pay disparities in the labor market from *Science and Technology Guide*, a monthly CAST publication that is widely circulated, and published it in another, less prominent journal. The plagiarism was discovered after the two journals merged their editorial offices and CAST became publisher of both journals. The second incident involved a faculty member at the Institute of Higher Education of Tongji University in Shanghai, who copied an article in the *Guide* about chaos theory. The plagiarism was spotted by a reader.

Both plagiarists were identified in a May 1997 article in the *Guide*, which has decided not to accept any more submissions from the authors. "There must be no compromise over dishonesty and no cover-up. Taking pity will harm the cause of science," says Cai Decheng, former standing vice president of the *Guide*.

Chinese scientists and journal editors see the convention as a useful tool and a necessary step in combating misconduct. "These cases of misconduct have ruined scientific values and damaged academic standards," says Zhang Yutai, first secretary of the CAST Secretariat. But some scientists worry that it will not be sufficient to root out the problem. "The burden of proof is mainly on the journals themselves," notes one director of CAST who requested anonymity. "But it is difficult for editors to raise copyright or other legal issues with the wrongdoer." Journals that decide to conduct investigations often get little help from the home institutions, notes one editor: "Some institutions and universities cover up the wrongdoing to protect their own reputation."

> **"There must be no compromise over dishonesty. Taking pity will harm the cause of science."**
>
> **—Cai Decheng**

The process needs to go a step further, agrees Tsou Chen-lu, a professor of biophysics and former head of the National Laboratory of Biomacromolecules in Beijing. "What we need is a convention on morality and behavior of Chinese science researchers that builds upon this convention," says Tsou. Without a broad national policy, he and other scientists fear that self-interest may stifle efforts to root out misconduct.

–JUSTIN WANG

Justin Wang writes for *China Features* in Beijing.

CREDIT: SAM KITTNER

ScienceScope

The Devil Is in the Data Rita Colwell (below), director of the National Science Foundation, has taken the unusual step of opposing new data access regulations being proposed by her own Administration. The law, written last year by Senator Richard Shelby (R–AL), is designed to force taxpayer-funded scientists to turn over their raw data to anyone who files a Freedom of Information Act request. The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB), however, has attempted to limit the law's reach by interpreting it narrowly (*Science*, 12 February, p. 914). Under rules the OMB hopes to finalize by 30 September, researchers would have to disclose only published data used to develop policy or rules.

But that compromise doesn't sit well with Colwell. "No matter how narrowly drawn," the rule "will likely harm the process of research in all fields," she wrote in a 22 February letter to OMB Director Jacob Lew. Instead, she urges the White House to get behind a bill sponsored by Representative George Brown (D–CA) that would repeal the law.

Australia's Food Court A special "citizens court" will put genetically modified (GM) foods on trial in Australia next week. Sponsors of the unusual courtroom drama, including the Australian Museum and private groups, hope it will help forge a consensus on how the government should regulate the controversial products.

On 10 March, 14 lay jurors will gather at the Old Parliament House in Canberra to begin questioning a range of experts on eight hotly debated questions, including whether Australia should support international regulation. The jury's verdicts—to be rendered after 3 days of testimony—could help shape government regulations, such as GM food labeling requirements due in May. Observers hope the trial, modeled after a public-input process developed in the Netherlands, will help steer officials to wise decisions. Jurors "can be pretty damned insightful and see through the guff to the heart of the matter," says biologist Richard Jefferson of Cambia, a Canberra-based agricultural research institute.

Contributors: Robert Service, Eliot Marshall, Jocelyn Kaiser, Elizabeth Finkel