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Science Policy News

News from the intersection of entomology and public policy

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ESA in DC

ESA Advocacy Priorities Included in 2023 Federal Funding Package

In December, President Biden signed into law a \$1.7 trillion fiscal year (FY) 2023 [appropriations package](#) that increases funding to most federal programs of interest to the scientific research and education communities.



Federal agencies will now focus on spending FY 2023 appropriations and issuing funding solicitations, as well as continuing to execute programs and release funding from the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, the *Inflation Reduction Act*, and the *CHIPS and Science Act*.

Highlights from the FY 2023 omnibus package of most relevance to entomology and related fields are:

- **Department of Health and Human Services:** The omnibus includes the bipartisan *PREVENT Pandemics Act*, for which ESA as well as the Vector-Borne Disease Network have worked to build support since last spring. Among the many provisions, it will change the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention director into a Senate-confirmed position, establish a Bio-Preparedness Workforce Pilot Program—which will include public service loan forgiveness for infectious disease and emergency response professionals—and authorize more support for data modernization and biosurveillance. Within the total amount provided to CDC, the bill

allocates \$26 million for Lyme disease, a \$5.5 million increase over FY 2022 levels; \$62.6 million for vector-borne diseases, an \$8 million increase, to expand programs authorized under the *Kay Hagan Tick Act*; and \$751 million for emerging and zoonotic infectious diseases, a \$58 million increase above the FY 2022 enacted level. Climate change and health efforts at the CDC were flat funded compared to FY 2022 levels at \$10 million. The bill also provides \$1.5 billion for the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health in addition to the \$1 billion appropriated in FY 2022.

- **U.S. Department of Agriculture:** The bill provides \$1.7 billion for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, USDA's premier extramural research agency, representing a modest 3.9 percent increase. NIFA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, USDA's flagship competitive grants program, was funded at \$455 million, a \$10 million increase over FY 2022 levels. Of note, the bill supports \$1 million for the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority to develop a management structure and begin hiring staff. It also includes \$2 million for the Research Facilities Act, a modest amount that nevertheless represents the first funding for this competitive grant program for agriculture research facilities since it was authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill.
- **Environmental Protection Agency:** The omnibus reauthorizes the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act with additional funding from user fees, authorizes the creation of a Vector Expedited Review Voucher program through the Office of Pesticide Programs, and includes guidance to the EPA to develop a model for adult mosquito control as well as to increase resources in support of this effort. EPA's Science and Technology account received \$802.3 million, an increase of \$52.1 million or 6.9 percent above the FY 2022 enacted level, with increases across all research accounts. Despite this increase, funding for the Science to Achieve Results Program, which supports extramural research, remained flat at \$28.6 million, with congressional direction for the EPA to consider reviving the STAR Graduate Research Fellowship Program and the development of an investigator-driven modality.
- **National Science Foundation:** NSF was funded at \$9.9 billion in the omnibus when all supplemental funding is included, an increase of \$1 billion or 11.7 percent above the FY 2022 enacted level, the largest increase for the agency in over a decade. All growth to NSF would be provided by supplemental funding included in the omnibus bill, with \$700 million in general funding for the agency and \$335 million specifically included for implementing the science provisions of the *CHIPS and Science Act*, including the new Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships directorate for which sustainability, climate, and the bioeconomy have been prioritized. The bill directs NSF to spend no less than \$970 million to support climate science and sustainability research through the U.S. Global Change Research Program and Clean

Energy Technology priority areas. This represents a 7.8 percent increase over FY 2022 enacted levels.

For more detail, see Lewis-Burke Associates' "[Analysis of the FY 2023 Omnibus Spending Package: Implications for Research, Higher Education, and Academic Medicine.](#)"

ESA Welcomes New Members of 118th Congress

Following more than two years of closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic and January 6th insurrection, Capitol Hill has finally fully reopened to the public as of January 3. This was also Swearing-In Day for members, when advocates traditionally take to the Hill to meet with new members and staff, share their priorities, and try to identify alignments for future legislative efforts.

ESA wrote [letters](#) welcoming each newly elected member of the 118th Congress, congratulating them on their wins, introducing ESA, and sharing a [one-page document highlighting the Society's priorities](#). While not every office immediately sees an alignment with the elected member's priorities coming into Congress, no member had yet received their committee assignments prior to swearing in, and many will soon find their committee responsibilities as well as constituent concerns intersect with ESA's. By opening these lines of communications, legislators and their staff know who to come to when they need assistance, whether for technical information or building support for their bills.

Silvana Paula-Moraes Named New ESA Liaison to EPA

Since 2010, ESA has supported a [subject matter expert \(SME\) and liaison](#) to the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency Office of Pesticide Programs. The SME represents the breadth of ESA's membership to EPA-OPP and provides critical input on topics such as clarity of labels, guidelines for efficacy testing of pesticides on various arthropods, utility of label mitigations, spray drift, invasive arthropod species, insecticide resistance, and the role of insecticides in integrated pest management.



This individual also maintains a network of entomological peers to consult on subject areas beyond those of the SME's expertise to provide a breadth of experience. Additionally, the SME sits on the ESA Science Policy Committee.

Allan Felsot, Ph.D., of Washington State University served in this role from 2015 through 2022. Following the culmination of his two terms, service for which ESA is most grateful, ESA invited [Silvana Paula-Moraes](#), Ph.D., assistant professor of crop pest management at the University of Florida's West Florida Research and Education Center, to step into the position. [Learn more about the ESA Liaison to the EPA Office of Pesticide Programs.](#)

ESA Provides Feedback on National Strategy for Vector-Borne Disease

On December 20, ESA provided [feedback](#) in response to the request for information from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on "Developing the National Public Health Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Vector-Borne Diseases in Humans." This is the next step in an ongoing process that began with the *21st Century Cures Act* back in 2016, which established the Tick-Borne Disease Working Group and builds in the proposals from the *Kay Hagan Tick Act* in 2019.

The CDC, five other federal departments, and EPA introduced a [National Public Health Framework for the Prevention and Control of Vector-Borne Diseases in Humans](#) in September 2020, which was put out for public comment and which ESA also responded to. Building off the feedback from that, the National Public Health Strategy was created. The agencies involved are now poring over the results from the 30 comments submitted, and a proposed report is due to Congress in December 2023.

Vector-Borne Disease Network Hosts CDC Leaders' Recap of 2022 Activities

On December 13, Sue Visser, DrPH, Ben Beard, Ph.D., and Lyle Peterson, M.D., of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Division of Vector-Borne Diseases (DVBD) joined a call as guests of the [Vector-Borne Disease Network](#), the coalition of non-profit organizations, membership and trade associations, vector control groups, and educational institutions such as the CDC Regional Centers of Excellence led by ESA. The CDC leaders provided an update on the major takeaways from 2022.

While for some the dual hats of DVBD and COVID-19 emergency response are going back to a singular hat, the Mpox (formerly known as Monkeypox) outbreak means others are still deployed for that emergency response, as well as ongoing responses to the polio and Ebola

outbreaks. But, on the upside, the DVBD received its largest Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity program funding yet, with \$16 million supporting state-level vector management efforts.

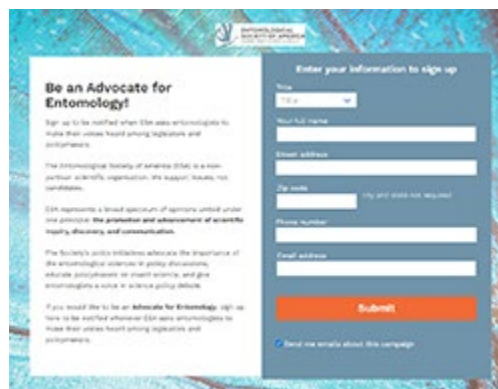
The request for proposals for the "[Strengthening Training, Evaluation, and Partnerships in the Prevention and Control of Vector-Borne Diseases](#)," the complement to the Centers of Excellence through training, evaluation, and partnership (explicitly no research), recently was released, with applications due February 3. CDC hosted a webinar on January 10 to address public questions. Current COE leads are not eligible for the new funding opportunity due to the overlapping funding for the training strategy, but partner institutions on the COEs are.

Visser also mentioned that the [Public Health Entomology for All](#) program, a cooperative agreement between CDC/DVBD and ESA completed its first year of programming and is looking forward to expanding efforts this year. The applications for the 10-week internships and 1-and 2-year fellowships for students and recent graduates from minority-serving institutions are [now open](#). This partnership aims to help individuals see the potential for themselves in public health entomology as a career and work toward a future in which the breadth of the workforce looks like the breadth of the nation to create more equitable and inclusive public health solutions.

Advocate for Entomology!

Sign Up for ESA Action Alerts

Be an advocate for entomology! Periodically, ESA issues new topic-specific advocacy alerts, enabling ESA members to easily connect with legislators and offer timely subject-matter expertise. [Sign up now to receive ESA science-policy action alerts.](#)

A screenshot of a web form titled "Be an Advocate for Entomology!". The form is set against a background of a map. On the left side, there is introductory text about the Entomological Society of America (ESA) and its mission. On the right side, there is a registration form with the heading "Enter your information to sign up". The form includes fields for "Title", "Your full name", "E-mail address", "City and state (or zip)", "Phone number", and "Email address". There is a "Submit" button at the bottom right of the form. A checkbox at the bottom left of the form is checked and labeled "Send me emails about this campaign".

Or, act now to contact your legislators through one of our three current Action Alerts:

- [Help Pass the PREVENT Pandemics Act](#)
- [Tell Congress About the Threat of Invasive Species](#)
- [Encourage Congress to Help Save Coffee and Promote IPM](#)

Congressional Updates

Speaker Vote Delays Start of 118th Congress, McCarthy Prevails

The 118th Congress was initially scheduled to start on January 3 with a vote for the new Speaker of the House and adoption of a rules package for the new Congress. After 15 rounds of voting, Representative Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) won the position early in the morning of January 7 after days of negotiations with a group of conservative Republican lawmakers aligned with the House Freedom Caucus who were determined to block his bid for Speaker. McCarthy was expected to become the next Speaker after Republicans gained control of the House after the November midterm elections, but his path to the Speakership was rockier than many anticipated.

Now that a Speaker is in place, the House has begun swearing in new members, organizing committees, and considering legislation. The chamber passed a rules package for the new Congress that includes concessions McCarthy made to gain support for his bid. The chamber is finalizing committee and subcommittee leadership positions and rosters. While the conflict over the Speaker election is over, it highlights the difficulty McCarthy will face in corralling his Republican caucus. This dynamic will impact the ability of the House and the 118th Congress to advance legislation, including fiscal year (FY) 2024 spending bills and "must-pass" bills like raising the federal debt limit as well as reauthorization of the Farm Bill.

Research Discussed at Senate Agriculture Committee Farm Bill Hearing

In early December, the Senate Agriculture Committee hosted a [hearing](#) to discuss the Farm Bill Title VII, Research and Related Matters, in preparation for the upcoming Farm Bill reauthorization. The hearing featured Chavonda Jacobs-Young, Ph.D., under secretary for research, education, and economics at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, as the sole witness on the first panel. Jacobs-Young advocated for three areas to strengthen agriculture research: investing in research, bolstering agricultural infrastructure, and promoting agricultural workforce development.

Jacobs-Young said USDA will publish an implementation plan for the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA), which was authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill, in early 2023. Due to a lack of long-term committed resources, she also conceded that currently no timeline is in place to hire an executive director for the program. In the meantime, she said USDA is collaborating with the Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research to help facilitate stakeholder engagement regarding the structure and operations of AGARDA.

Witnesses on the second panel emphasized the need for increased investments in agriculture research infrastructure, workforce development and diversity, and fundamental research to address societal challenges impacting agriculture. The Senate Agriculture Committee will continue to hold Farm Bill hearings throughout the next several months. The current Farm Bill expires in September 2023 and will require Congress to pass a new bill or extend the current legislation.

Federal Agency and Administration Updates

Global Change Research Program Issues Strategic Plan, Seeks Input on Product Plans

The U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) released its [2022-2031 Strategic Plan](#) to outline shared priorities, which reflect input from all 13 participating agencies. The strategic priorities are organized in four pillars: advancing science, engaging the nation, informing decisions, and collaborating internationally. In contrast to prior decadal studies, this one is notable in its increased emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion and its explicit discussion of the importance of the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge. Further, the strategy also places a greater emphasis on the relationship between climate change and other global challenges, including biodiversity loss, which is an increasing focus of USGCRP.

The strategy was published as USGCRP conducts work on two major products in collaboration with the scientific community. First is the Fifth National Climate Assessment, with [comments requested](#) through **January 27**. The second is the first National Nature Assessment, with [input](#) welcome through **March 31**. Additionally, ESA is working on organizing comments to submit and soliciting feedback from members. [Submit your comments to ESA](#).

Report Recommends Steps to Advance Bioeconomy, OSTP Seeks Comments

As part of the Biden Administration's ongoing work to advance research and development related to the bioeconomy, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) released a new [report](#) prepared by the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. The PCAST report presents several recommendations for how biomanufacturing should be harnessed to effectively address, among other topics, the nation's goals related to sustainability, environmental justice, and climate change. The report was required by

President Biden's September 2022 [Executive Order](#), *Advancing Biotechnology and Biomanufacturing Innovation for a Sustainable, Safe, and Secure American Bioeconomy*.

OSTP also recently released two requests for information related to the bioeconomy. The [first](#) seeks feedback from stakeholders on how advances in biotechnology and biomanufacturing can further societal goals, especially those relevant to climate, energy, food, and agriculture, with responses due **January 20**. The [second](#) seeks input on the development of a streamlined regulatory system for biotechnology-based products, with responses due **February 3**.

White House Issues Guidance to Engage Indigenous Knowledge in Federal Research

On November 30, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and the White House Council on Environmental Quality released [new guidance](#) for agencies on including Indigenous Knowledge in federal research, policy, and decision making. The memorandum intends to help federal agencies understand Indigenous Knowledge and its value, build and sustain relationships with Tribal Nations and Indigenous Peoples, and apply Indigenous Knowledge to federal programs. The guidance asserts that "Indigenous Knowledge is a valid form of evidence for inclusion in federal policy, research, and decision making," citing Indigenous Knowledge holders' early observations of environmental changes as an example. The accompanying [implementation memo](#) directs agencies to provide a progress report to OSTP within 180 days on the steps they have taken to implement the guidance. Guidance for this policy was shared at the [White House Tribal Nations Summit](#), held at OSTP and at the Department of Interior on November 30 and December 1.

The new guidance encourages agencies to foster and maintain partnerships with Tribal Nations, including through co-management of resources and co-production of knowledge. This is especially important as Tribal Leaders have consistently indicated that their communities have been and will continue to be greatly impacted by the impacts of climate change and other environmental disasters. According to the guidance, to work toward meaningful and mutually beneficial partnership, agencies are encouraged to collaborate with Tribal government agencies and staff; Inter-Tribal organizations and nonprofit leaders; Indigenous Knowledge holders; local and state governments; and academics and scholars as an additional resource for partnerships and co-production of knowledge. Federal researchers are also encouraged to proactively seek opportunities to collaborate with Indigenous Knowledge holders to co-produce scientific information and inform policy decisions. The guidance calls on agencies to include and value Indigenous Knowledge in federal grant opportunities and to offer funding for co-production of knowledge. For more, see the

December 1 press release, "[White House Releases First-of-a-Kind Indigenous Knowledge Guidance for Federal Agencies](#)."

Nations Agree to New Framework to Slow Biodiversity Loss

In a historic agreement, 196 nations approved a new global biodiversity framework in December that establishes new targets to curb biodiversity loss, an agreement known as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The agreement sets out that parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will establish domestic goals to help achieve the conservation of 30 percent of the world's land, inland waterways, and coastal and ocean areas by 2030, referred to as the "30 by 30" goal.

Like the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, this new agreement leaves each country to establish its own pathways to achieve results, with work toward 23 targets, including goals to reduce farm runoff, the rate at which invasive species are introduced to ecosystems, and the risk of pesticides. Although the U.S. is not party to the CBD, the agreement reached is consistent with the Biden administration's [America the Beautiful Initiative](#), which includes its own "30 by 30" goals.

CBD parties also made a decision to establish a new multilateral financial mechanism for the sharing of benefits from the use of digital sequence information (e.g., genetic sequence data), though the details of the fund are anticipated to be discussed further leading into the next CBD meeting, likely occurring in 2024 in Turkey. Conversations there will address how this fund will interface with academia and industry as it pertains both to research and technology development. For more, see the [summary of decisions](#) from the CBD December 2022 meeting.

Funding and Engagement Opportunities

EPA Seeks Feedback on Pesticide Registrations, Endangered Species Workplan

The Environmental Protection Agency currently has several requests for feedback on regulations out for public comment.

- Pesticide Registration Review: Proposed Interim Decision for [Carbaryl](#). Comments due **February 14**.

- Pesticide Registration Review: Proposed Interim Decisions for Several Pesticides, including [Etofenprox](#), which has utility in rice, pet product uses, and residential uses, among others. Comments due **March 8**.
- [Comment](#) on EPA's [Endangered Species Act workplan update](#). Comments due **February 14**.

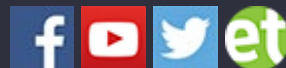
EPA Solicits Nominations to National Environmental Justice Advisory Council

The Environmental Protection Agency is [soliciting nominations](#) to the [National Environmental Justice Advisory Council](#). NEJAC advises the EPA administrator on a range of issues related to environmental justice and is composed of members from academia, community-based organizations, industry, tribal governments and organizations, and state and local governments. The agency is looking to add members located in all EPA regions, and especially individuals with expertise in "youth-led or youth-focused environmental organization; environmental measures; public health/health disparities; water infrastructure and other water concerns; farmworkers and pesticides; community sustainability and resiliency; green jobs and green infrastructure; land use and equitable development; and emerging inclusion of sub-populations." Nominations must be submitted by **March 17**.

Learn More About ESA Science Policy

ESA Science Policy Program Links

- [ESA Science Advocacy Priorities](#)
- [Position Statements](#)
- [Fact Sheets](#)
- [Science Policy Fellows Program](#)
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