



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S CHIEF SCIENCE ADVISOR

Professor Sir Peter Gluckman, KNZM FRSNZ FMedSci FRS
Chief Science Advisor

Media Release

29 July 2014

Science in Society plan is important step forward

With today's launch of *A Nation of Curious Minds*, the national strategic plan for science in society by Ministers Joyce and Parata, Sir Peter Gluckman, the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, called it an important next step in a journey. Sir Peter was Chair of the National Science Challenges Panel that recommended Government take action in this area, and was Chair of the Reference Group that advised on the plan.

"I am delighted that the Government responded to the advice of the Challenge Panel. In this plan, we have for the first time a formal recognition of the fact that all New Zealanders have a role to play in mobilising science for New Zealand's benefit, but also that this will take time," said Sir Peter. "Just as with good science itself, this plan is taking a long-term perspective, with a commitment to testing, analysing, evaluating and refining the initiatives designed to encourage better public engagement with science and a better engagement of science with the public."

Sir Peter noted that a stand-out feature of the plan is that it does not simply put the onus on the public – whether students, families, or communities – to become better informed about science. Rather, there is a clear indication of the responsibility of the science sector and the role of the media in making research more accessible and relevant to all New Zealanders. "It is a two-way conversation," said Sir Peter. "Scientists can no longer assume that their research direction and their results are of interest only to their peers, just as the public and governments need to better understand the types of answers that they can and cannot expect from science."

Sir Peter pointed to the plan's key initiative, the Participatory Science Platform as a core integrating activity that has the potential to tie together many of the strategic goals including producing new research that is both scientifically and locally relevant; providing opportunities for schools to augment STEM learning while inspiring young people toward science and technology career options; and helping the public understand and manage both the power and the limits of science.

For further information,

See www.msi.govt.nz/update-me/major-projects/science-and-society-project/
contact: csa@pmcsa.org.nz or +64(0)9 923 6318