

Predicting the year in chemistry

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With 2020 just starting, scientists around the world are wondering what the year has in store for them. To help steer them straight, *Chemical & Engineering News (C&EN)*, the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society, is highlighting key business and policy issues that will impact the chemistry enterprise across the globe.

After several years of growth, the U.S. and European [chemical](#) industries could see that momentum slow. In contrast, Chinese firms are on the upswing due to easing tariffs and new investment laws, and Middle Eastern petrochemicals are stronger than ever. The pharmaceutical services sector appears on track for another strong year, and diagnostic instrumentation makers are slated for double-digit growth. Many businesses are looking to improve their environmental practices, with an emphasis on reducing the use of plastic and recycling more materials.

In terms of policy, C&EN staff predicts that the U.S. government will take steps toward updating chemical risk assessments, along with action on classifying per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (known as PFAS) as hazardous materials. Environmental activism is expected to increase, especially against industrial chemical development in the U.S. Another important trend is protecting U.S.-based research from foreign interference without hindering [scientific collaboration](#) and openness.

The article, "C&EN's World Chemical Outlook 2020," is freely available [here](#).

Provided by American Chemical Society

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