

Top New Zealand scientist Paul Callaghan dies

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(AP) -- Sir Paul Callaghan, a top New Zealand scientist who gained international recognition for his work in molecular physics, has died after a long battle with bowel cancer. He was 64.

"New Zealand has suffered a tremendous loss," Sir Peter Gluckman, Prime Minister John Key's chief [science adviser](#), said in a statement Saturday. "Paul has been our most distinguished public scientist and in the world of molecular physics has been a giant."

Callaghan, who was diagnosed with cancer in 2008, was best known for his work with [magnetic resonance](#), a field that has practical applications in everything from health care to industrial production. He was also known for his work on [nanoscience](#), which involves studying properties of substances at the scale of the individual atom.

Callaghan won numerous accolades over his career, and was elected a Fellow to the Royal Society of London. In 2009, he was honored with a knighthood and in 2011 was named New Zealander of the Year.

An outspoken public intellectual, Callaghan argued in favor of commercializing science. In 2004, he founded Magritek, a Wellington-based company that used [magnetic resonance imaging](#) and [nuclear magnetic resonance](#) for industrial and research applications.

Gluckman said Callaghan was able to make science accessible to regular New Zealanders by explaining it in a straightforward and entertaining

way, and that he was able to use radio, books and public lectures to promote his view that the country could use science to become a wealthier and better place.

Deputy Prime Minister Bill English said in a statement that Callaghan earned the respect of everyone, even those who disagreed with him.

"His knowledge and willingness to teach others was an inspiration to not only the science community, but New Zealand as a whole," English said. "He brought a unique combination of brilliance, integrity and courage to public debate."

Callaghan began his studies at Wellington's Victoria University, where he completed a degree in physics, before continuing them at the University of Oxford in England, where he earned a doctorate.

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