

FONZ LETTER

NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE



Friends of New Zealand

April 2018

Follow us on



DANZ visits NZ



MEPs with EU Ambassador in Wellington Bernard Savage

We are delighted that the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with Australia and New Zealand (DANZ) visited New Zealand last February. During the visit, DANZ members met with their counterparts in the New Zealand Parliament, Government representatives and other stakeholders in NZ. The delegation visited the capital Wellington as well as Auckland, the largest city and business hub of NZ.

The MEP delegation was led by its Chair Ms. Ulrike Müller (ALDE, DE) and included also Hannu Takkula (ALDE, FL), Monika Vana (Greens, AT) and Derek Vaughan (S&D, UK). They were accompanied by DANZ Administrator Ulrich Jochheim.

Regular inter-parliamentary missions like this one aim to further strengthen relations between NZ and the EU on a parliamentary level, and to discuss matters high on the bilateral agenda, such as trade relations, fight against climate change, development assistance and science & technology. In March 2017, a delegation of NZ parliamentarians visited Brussels.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- DANZ visits NZ
- PM Ardern and DPM Peters visit European Capitals
- Commissioner Bienkowska visits NZ
- Inaugural EU-NZ PARC Joint Committee
- CPTPP signed in Santiago
- New Zealand's Pacific reset
- Government announces new "wellbeing approach"
- NZ joins CleanSeas campaign
- NZ least corrupt country in the world
- Auckland 3rd best city to live in

PM Ardern and Minister of Foreign Affairs Peters visit European capitals

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern is undertaking her first official trip to Europe this week. Her first stop will be in Paris where she will meet with French President Emmanuel Macron and Prime Minister Édouard Philippe in Paris. Climate change and an EU-NZ FTA will be on the agenda in bilateral discussions. She will also deliver a keynote speech at the Paris Institute of Political

Studies, outlining ways the two countries can cooperate on climate change and environmental issues.

The Prime Minister will then travel to Berlin at the invitation of Chancellor Angela Merkel where she will hold talks with the Chancellor and deliver a speech setting out New Zealand's Coalition Government's vision for achieving progressive and inclusive growth.

The context of this visit is the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in London (16-20 April) which the Prime Minister will be attending. While in London, the PM will also meet with British Prime Minister Theresa May to discuss bilateral and international issues.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Peters will also be participating in the CHOGM meeting in London. Prior to that he will visit Brussels, where he will meet with HRVP Mogherini, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Belgian Foreign Minister Didier Reynders, before going to Flanders to visit WWI historical sites.



Commissioner Bienkowska visits New Zealand

Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska met with New Zealand Minister of Commerce Hon Kris Faafoi on 8 March and with head of the NZ Space Agency Peter Crabtree during her mission to New Zealand. This was a great occasion to reaffirm the importance we attach to EU-NZ cooperation on science and innovation.

In recognition of International Women's Day, the Commissioner met with Minister for Women Hon Julie-Anne Genter.

For New Zealand 2018 is a special year locally- it marks the 125th anniversary of women's suffrage in New Zealand. NZ was the first country in the world to grant the vote to women. Ms Genter and Commissioner Bienkowska attended the Suffrage 125 exhibition at Te Papa museum, Wellington to commemorate the occasion together.

Commissioner Bieńkowska also visited Xero - a NZ-based software company that develops cloud-based accounting software for small and medium-sized businesses. Xero is one of the most successful NZ companies of the last decade, and its products are used in 180 countries around the globe.



Commissioner Bieńkowska meeting with Minister Faafoi

(*text from the [EEAS website](#)).

Inaugural EU-NZ PARC Joint Committee

At the end of February the European Union and New Zealand reaffirmed their commitment to deepen their partnership in the coming years, and explored opportunities for further collaboration.

Following the signature of a Partnership Agreement on Relations and Cooperation (PARC) in October 2016, the Joint Committee established under the agreement held its first meeting in Wellington. The EU delegation was led by Ms Paola Pampaloni, Deputy Managing Director of the Asia and Pacific Department of the European External Action Service. The New Zealand delegation was led by Mr Rob Taylor, Divisional Manager, Europe Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Joint Committee noted the close alignment between the EU and New Zealand on many major regional, international and global issues, shared perspectives on key Asian strategic issues, and looked forward to their upcoming Strategic Dialogue in June 2018. Both renewed their commitment to continuing close cooperation in the Pacific, where their Partnership has already delivered significant results in increasing access to renewable energy.

There was also a reaffirmed commitment to working closely together in multilateral fora, and especially for the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change, and to exploring the potential of joint work towards achieving its goals.

The parties discussed the global security environment and noted the importance of security cooperation for both sides. They committed to continuing to take opportunities to deepen this engagement as the EU's security architecture evolves. The parties noted the importance of an effective rules-based system to support international trade, reviewed their existing trade dialogues, including in agriculture and fisheries, and discussed preparations for the launch of free trade negotiations between the EU and New Zealand.

The parties noted the strength of existing research, education and people-to-people links, and discussed options for deepening these in the years ahead.

(*text from the [EEAS website](#))



Photo: Rob Taylor, Divisional Manager for Europe at the NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Paola Pampaloni, Deputy Managing Director of the Asia and Pacific Department, EEAS

CPTPP signed in Santiago

Minister for Trade and Export Growth David Parker signed the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) in Santiago, Chile in March. The CPTPP will enter into force after it has been ratified by six countries.

The Agreement brings together 11 countries whose combined economies make up 13.5 percent of world GDP – worth a combined US\$10 trillion. The 11 countries involved in the CPTPP are New Zealand, Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Singapore, and Viet Nam.

Alongside the Agreement, New Zealand has also joined Canada and Chile in issuing a [Joint Declaration](#) on fostering progressive and inclusive trade. The declaration affirms the right of each country to regulate to achieve legitimate public policy objectives, in such areas as health, safety and the environment.

It also includes commitments to work together through trade policies on sustainable development, climate action, gender equality, indigenous rights and minimum work standards.

"It's great to see growing international acknowledgement and understanding that we need

trade that works for everyone,” Mr Parker noted. “Our countries are committed to making sure the benefits of trade and investment are broadly shared and we will be working together to achieve this. We expect CPTPP to make a meaningful contribution to progressive and inclusive trade in the future. And together with Canada and Chile we intend to ensure the promise of CPTPP is delivered on for workers, families, farmers, businesses and consumers”, he added.

Side letters on ISDS

New Zealand has signed agreements to exclude compulsory investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) between them with five countries in the

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Minister Parker said the agreements are “side letters” with the same treaty-level status as the Agreement.

“I’m pleased we have been able to make so much progress in just a few months. We haven’t been able to get every country on board, but signing letters with this many CPTPP partners is a real achievement,” said Mr Parker. “The investor-state dispute settlement mechanism had been one of our main concerns about the agreement (...) We have tackled it from several different directions. We have also made it clear that we will oppose including ISDS in any future free trade agreements involving New Zealand.”



Official signing ceremony of the CPTPP in Santiago, Chile

New Zealand’s Pacific Reset

On 1 March New Zealand’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Winston Peters, announced the Government’s intention for a “Pacific Reset”. (see full speech [here](#))

The Pacific is important to New Zealand because of the geographical, historical, and social connections between New Zealand and the region. The Minister noted that: “New Zealand is a Pacific country, linked by history, culture, politics, and demographics”. Yet it is a region challenged by a dizzying array of social and environmental problems.

In his speech the Minister described the Reset as: “a re-energised approach based on New Zealand values and increased technical and financial support to the Pacific. A re-energized approach also based on greater coordination of effort by all New Zealand stakeholders with an interest in the Pacific, with Pacific

governments and people, and with key partners near and far.”

There will be two strands. The first will encompass renewed Pacific diplomacy based on the principles of understanding, friendship, mutual benefit, collective ambition and sustainability. The second strand is to “expand the size of our official development assistance programme to help our Pacific neighbours improve their resilience, and through that their autonomy.”

The Minister also noted the importance of working with likeminded partners like the EU to pool our resources and influence for the benefit of the Pacific. This will build on the work New Zealand and the EU are currently undertaking on renewable energy projects in the Pacific.

A wellbeing approach to assessing the Government's balance sheet

The New Zealand Treasury is moving towards a more holistic way of assessing the Government's balance sheet, by incorporating principles from the Living Standards Framework alongside financial considerations, recently announced Finance Minister Grant Robertson.

Under the Public Finance Act, the Treasury is required to report every

four years on the past, present and forecast future value of the Government's assets and liabilities.

"It is important that we continue to monitor this progress, as the Investment Statement allows New Zealanders to assess how the Government is managing assets and liabilities on their behalf," Minister Robertson said. "But it is also important for us to start taking

a more holistic view of how we assess what the Government owns. In the past this document has looked at the Government's balance sheet from a purely financial perspective. The Treasury is now starting to also look at the link between the Government's investments and peoples' wellbeing.

New Zealand joins CleanSeas campaign

New Zealand has joined the United Nations-led CleanSeas campaign to rid our oceans of plastic, Associate Environment Minister Eugenie Sage announced recently.

The CleanSeas campaign was launched by the UN Environment in February 2017 and more than 40 countries have joined the initiative so far. The campaign aims to engage governments, the general public, civil society and the private sector in the fight against marine plastic by reducing the use of non-recoverable and single-use plastics.

"Turtles and other wildlife are being killed by litter in our oceans. Also the issue of microplastic in our oceans and its effect on the food chain is a concern for all species and is a potential risk to human health.

New Zealand is proud to be joining this campaign to stop this from happening," Ms Sage said.

Scientists estimate that there are over 150 million tonnes of plastics in the ocean today. If nothing changes then plastic in oceans will weigh more than all the fish that live in them by 2050.

"We are excited to have New Zealand join us in the fight against ocean pollution," Erik Solheim, head of UN Environment said. "By joining the CleanSeas campaign, they are affirming their pledges to reduce waste and we hope that other nations can also follow suit and join the campaign." Ms Sage said the Government was taking steps to prevent litter entering oceans by hitting it at its source on land. Measures include:



Sefanaia Nawadra, Head of UN Environment's Pacific Sub Regional Office, Bianca Cook, sailors on Turn the Tide on Plastic, and the New Zealand Associate Environment Minister, Eugenie Sage

- ✓ Banning products containing plastic microbeads – this will come into effect in June.
- ✓ Developing options to get rid of single use plastic bags.
- ✓ Supporting data gathering on marine debris along our coastlines and oceans.
- ✓ Funding initiatives through the Waste Minimisation Fund (WMF) including Keep New Zealand Beautiful, Sustainable Coastlines and the Packaging Forum.
- ✓ Reviewing implementation of the Waste Minimisation Act to use its powers better and promote waste minimisation.

"We need to move to a circular economy where we make, use and return products and materials instead of the current model where we take resources, use them, then dispose of them", stressed Minister Sage.

NZ named least corrupt country in the world

New Zealand's public sector has been ranked the least corrupt in the world in an annual global index.

New Zealand scored 89 out of 100 in non-government organisation Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, narrowly beating Denmark to top spot. The two nations were tied first last year.

State Services Associate Minister Clare Curran said she was pleased to see New Zealand's public service

maintain its high standards. "While we continue to hold the position of least-corrupt country and already have high standards of conduct and integrity, we must not be complacent," Curran said. "Our focus must be on building and maintaining the public's trust in the integrity of the public sector."

Curran also said the government would strive to further improve public transparency and free access to information.

Auckland 3rd best city in the world to live in

Auckland has kept its third placing in the Quality of Living survey by recruitment consultancy Mercer for the fifth year, having also achieved the podium position in 2012, 2015, 2016 and last year.

The survey ranks 450 cities throughout the world, considering 39 factors within 10 categories; consumer goods, economic environment, housing, medical and health considerations, natural environment, political and social environment, public services and transport, recreation, schools and education, and socio-cultural environment.



Mercer NZ chief executive Martin Lewington said New Zealand remains an attractive destination for expatriates on assignment. "There are a number of factors which have contributed to companies looking at establishing headquarters or relocating expats to Auckland," he said. "NZ's natural environment and subtropical climate, stable political and social environment and good medical and health services are the top three contributing factors for Auckland retaining third spot in the global rankings."