NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

New Zealand Ministry of
Foreign Affairs and Trade
Manatū Aorere

55 Molesworth Street
Private Bag 18–901
Wellington 6160
New Zealand

T +64 4 439 8000
F +64 4 472 9596

OIA 31187

5 November 2026

Personal details removed for proactive release

Tēnā koe Personal details removed for proactive release

Thank you for your email of 2 September 2026, in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

> *"Under the Official Information Act, please supply all formal written briefings produced for Forum Officials Committee meetings, the Pacific Islands Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting, and the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting held during August and September 2026."*

On 30 September 2026, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 25 working days because responding to your request necessitated the review of a large quantity of information, and due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request (section 15A(1)(a) and (b) of the OIA refers).

Response to your request

Please see the following table for a list of documents in scope of your request:

#	Title	Decision
1.	Pacific Islands Forum Officials Committee Meeting 4 – 5 August 2026	Some information withheld under s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i), and s9(2)(h).
2.	Minister of Foreign Affairs Rt Hon Winston Peters Pacific Islands Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting 7 August 2026	Some information withheld under s6(a), s6(b)(i), s9(2)(a), s9(2)(f)(iv), and s9(2)(g)(i).
3.	Officials Brief - Pacific Islands Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting 7 August 2026	Some information withheld under s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(a), and s9(2)(g)(i).
4.	Visit to the Pacific Islands Forum 30 August – 4 September 2026 Non-Pacific Attendees Briefing Material	Some information withheld under s6(a), s9(2)(a), s9(2)(g)(i), and s9(2)(j).
5.	DS PDG Pull-Aside: Green Climate Fund Executive Director	Some information withheld under s6(b)(i), s9(2)(g)(i)

#	Title	Decision
6.	Meeting Brief: World Bank Vice President Carlos Felipe Jaramillo	Some information withheld under s6(a), s6(b)(i), and s6(b)(ii).
7.	Minister Of Foreign Affairs Rt Hon Winston Peters: Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting 30 August – 1 September	Some information withheld under s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(b)(iii), s9(2)(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i), and s9(2)(j).
8.	Minister of Foreign Affairs Rt Hon Winston Peters Officials' Brief Pacific Island Forum Leader Meeting 30 August – 1 September	Some information withheld under s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), 7(b)(iii), s9(2)(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv), and s9(2)(g)(i).
9.	Officials' Brief: Pacific Island Forum Leaders Meeting 30 August – 2 September	Some information withheld under s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6b(ii), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), 7(b)(iii), s9(2)(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv), and s9(2)(g)(i).
10.	Prime Minister RT Hon Christopher Luxon Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting Briefing Pack 2 – 4 September 2026	Some information withheld under s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s7(b)(iii), s9(2)(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(g)(ii), s9(2)(j)
11	Agenda item 4: Peace and Security (11:00am)	Some information withheld under s9(2)(f)(iv)
12.	Roundtable on the Pacific Drive Towards 100% Renewables	Released in full

Some information is withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis;
- 6(b)(ii): to protect the passing of information from an international organisation on a confidential basis;
- 7(b): to avoid prejudicing relations between any of the Governments of New Zealand: the self-governing State of the Cook Islands: the self-governing State of Niue;
- 9(2)(a): to protect individuals' privacy;
- 9(2)(b)(ii): to avoid prejudice to the commercial position of another party;
- 9(2)(f)(iv): to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials;
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments;

- 9(2)(g)(ii): to protect officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment;
- 9(2)(h): to maintain legal professional privilege; and,
- 9(2)(j): to avoid prejudice to negotiations.

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, no public interest in releasing the information has been identified that would override the reasons for withholding it.

For your information, document 10 includes a bilateral meeting brief for a meeting with PM Rabuka. This bilateral meeting did not occur.

There are two briefings in scope of your request that are withheld in full, including the titles, under section 6(a) of the OIA, to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand government.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website: www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM
FORUM OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING

4 – 5 August 2026

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
START	**DAY 1: 4 August 2026**	
1.	**Opening** *(9.00am – 9.05am)* *"The Chair will call the meeting to order, and opening formalities will be observed."*	*NOTE: This brief reflects the provisional agenda circulated 11:16am on Wed 29/07/2026*
2.	**Adoption of Agenda and Meeting Timetable** *(9.05am – 9.10am)*	
	Scene-Setting Session	
3.		
	Institutional Matters	
4.	**Report of the Audit and Risk Sub-Committee** *(10:00am – 10:30am)* s6(b)(ii)	Please refer breakdown of ARSC Paper recommendations and New Zealand positions at end of briefing.
	Morning Tea Break (10.30am – 11.00am)	

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
5.	**Report of the FOC Sub-Committee on Prioritisation and Resourcing (FSPR)** *(11:00am – 1:00pm)* s6(b)(ii)	**<u>Suva Agreement</u>** • As agreed by Leaders, members must shoulder the costs of the Suva Agreement. s6(a) • s6(a) ***Context*** New Zealand and Australia provided interim funding for a transition period, the remainder of which is set to run out in December 2026. Leaders' agreed in 2022 to shoulder these costs between the membership. s6(a) s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(i) **<u>Sustainable Funding Strategy, Mid-Year Budget and Organisation Review</u>** • New Zealand welcomes the second triennial review of the Sustainable Funding Strategy and Organisational Review as substantive contributions to the ongoing financial viability of the Secretariat. • Our primary aim is to ensure the Secretariat is adequately resourced to perform its core mandate of implementing the decisions of Leaders.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
		• We welcome the direction of the Organisational Review and the proposed priority areas of reform. ***Context*** New Zealand sees the SFS and the Organisation Review as complementary processes to deliver greater efficiencies in the work of the Secretariat. We want the Secretariat to steward its finances appropriately and to manage its workload in accordance with Member mandate, Leader direction and then within its own resourcing capacity. s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(i) s6(a) s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(i) New Zealand welcomes the conclusion of the Organisation Review and welcomes the early focus on budget reform processes. This includes clear resource implications for new workstreams, a prioritisation exercise to guide resourcing and changes to better manage the Forum's Sub-Committees and Working Groups.
	Lunch Break (1.00pm – 2.00pm)	
	2050 STRATEGY THEMATIC AREA: POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND REGIONALISM	
6.	**Report of the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) *(2.00pm – 2.30pm)***	*Intervention from DEVECO* • New Zealand remains concerned about the impact of the fuel crisis on both the people and governments of Pacific countries. Support measures implemented by

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	governments place them under significant fiscal strain, particularly as fuel prices remain elevated for longer, while responses have been broad and not well targeted. • We support the work of the Regional Response Mechanism, noting that the findings of the Fuel Security Assessment have indicated that regional responses may have limited impact given Pacific countries' unique contexts and structural features. For this reason, we question whether a regional escalation framework would provide value. There is merit, however, in continuing a regional fuel security monitoring programme. • We are – collectively – getting to the point where some consideration of medium-term issues is warranted. The urgency has abated somewhat, but the overall risk remains. It would be a missed opportunity not to address the known issues and implement remedies, otherwise we could potentially find ourselves in a similar position when the next crisis occurs. • There is rich material in the Fuel Security Assessment report for Members to consider and take forward. We are aware that in some cases this is already happening, including through discussions with development partners, including the multilateral development banks. This is a constructive development. Each Member will have a specific set of remedies and mitigation measures to take forward, whether in storage, or sustainability of major fuel users, pricing and tariffs, and transition to renewable sources of energy. • We recognise the difficult trade-offs Pacific ministers face to balance energy security, affordability, and sustainability. Each country has to manage these trade-offs; and there is no silver bullet that can address all three issues for every country in the region. The assessment has shown that improving energy efficiency and transitioning to renewable energy is the only long-term option for reducing exposure to the volatility of supply and price shocks. New Zealand remains willing to support further country-level improvements in energy resilience.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	
7.	**Report of the FOC Sub-Committee on the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent** *(2:30pm – 3:30pm)* s6(b)(ii)	*2050 annual report* • 2050 Strategy Report: Happy to endorse. *Partnerships mechanism (MFA intervention)* • At our meeting last year, we observed an international environment under serious strain. • That underlines the importance of the Forum's partners. In a time of economic and global uncertainty, we need to keep our partners close.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	• This means we need to finalise the Forum Dialogue Partnership Mechanism in Palau. Strong partnerships support our region's security and prosperity. They also help to hold Partners to account on the things that matter to us. • We are looking for two things from this process. Firstly, we must improve engagement for both Forum Members and our Partners. We need structured, high-quality engagement with all our Partners, irrespective of status. Secondly, the process must keep the Forum in the driving seat. It is critical Partners respect our collective priorities and procedures. • s6(a) • While all change presents risk, there is greater risk in doing nothing. Continued inaction risks disincentivising Partners and pushing them out. • The spirit of hospitality runs deep in our Pacific region, as does respect. We have seen this balance work for others, including through our own experience as a partner of ASEAN. New Zealand is committed to seeing it work here too. *Communique drafting* • Communique drafting process: New Zealand is in favour of s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv)
8.	**Report of the FOC Sub-Committee on Forum International Engagement and Advocacy**	*MFA intervention*:

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	(FIEAS) *(3:30pm – 4.00pm)* s6(b)(ii)	• New Zealand supports a regional approach to international candidatures. We commend Palau and Samoa for your elections to the Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and to Kiribati for your election to the Commission on the Status of Women. • We commend for your consideration the re-election of Dr Penelope Ridings to the International Law Commission for the term 2028 to 2032. The work of the Commission does much to safeguard our region, including through its work on sea-level rise in relation to international law. • As an expert in international law, a former High Commissioner to Samoa, and with over 40 years of experience in Pacific issues, Dr Ridings is well positioned to ensure the Commission progresses international law in a way which recognises Pacific interests.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	
	Afternoon Tea Break (4.00pm – 4.15pm)	
	2050 STRATEGY THEMATIC AREA: PEACE AND SECURITY	
9.	**Report of the FOC Sub-Committee on Regional Security** *(4:15pm – 5:00pm)* s6(b)(ii)	*Includes security-related material from MFA intervention on strategic landscape.* • The Pacific Islands Forum has a critical role to play as we advance our shared, and intertwined, development and security priorities in an increasingly demanding environment. • The Ocean of Peace Declaration reaffirms our commitment to collective solutions to regional peace and security challenges. • But more is required to secure our region as an Ocean of Peace. We must think long term. *Regional Peace and Security Action Plan* • We endorse the **Regional Peace and Security Action Plan** moving forward as a framework for implementing the commitments our leaders have made under the Ocean of Peace Declaration and the Boe Declaration. *TSOC and Waqa Moana* • This is why combatting regional and domestic threats from **transnational, serious and organised crime** is a priority for New Zealand. It is important our domestic agencies including Customs and Police are working together on these issues. • This year we announced a $10m investment to help address social harm from drugs in the Pacific. We have also commenced work to disrupt drug trafficking in our region, and we look forward to coordinating with others to combat this issue.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	• The **Waqa Moana (*Wong-ga Moana)*** countering organised crime initiative provides a useful coordinating mechanism, and we thank Fiji for enabling this regional response. *Pacific Police Ministers Meeting* • In this context, New Zealand also acknowledges the role of **Pacific Police Ministers** and supports its institutionalisation as a regular Forum meeting**.** *Regional Security Agreement* • We also applaud the leadership of our Chair, Prime Minister Wale of Solomon Islands, on regional security issues. • We look forward to participating in further discussions – with you our fellow Members and as an incoming Troika member – on how we as a region can continue working together to secure our future. *JHoPS* • We value the work of **JHoPS** in the security space, including its work to lay the ground for the development of the Regional Operations Deployment Framework. • s9(2)(f)(iv) *Nuclear Priorities* • We think it is important for Leaders to reaffirm their unwavering commitment to a nuclear-weapon free Pacific given the inability of the May five-yearly NPT Review Conference to achieve an agreed outcome. In our view, Forum Leaders have a role in reinforcing global cooperation on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation though their language in the **2026 Leader's Statement.** • This language would seek to make clear Leaders' concern about increasing nuclear weapons stockpiles and capabilities, recall the deep impact of historical nuclear

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	weapons testing on Pacific peoples and our environment, and reaffirm the region's commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as underpinning the global norm against nuclear weapons testing. • We have drafted proposed language to be incorporated into the statement to this effect, and are happy to share with others around the table ahead of the Forum Foreign Ministers' Meeting. • New Zealand remains an engaged member of the CROP Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues in the Pacific. It is important that this Taskforce continues to progress work to deliver on the Leaders' request to address the impact of Pacific Nuclear Testing. • New Zealand also supports work to progress implementation of the provisions on victim assistance and environmental remediation in the context of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPBW). We note the TPNZ Review Conference will be held later this year in New York and hope it can progress decisions on these issues.
End	**Day 1: 4 August 2026**	
Start	**Day 2: 5 August 2026**	
	2050 STRATEGY THEMATIC AREA: PEOPLE CENTERED DEVELOPMENT	

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
10.	**Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting** (9:00am –9:30am) s6(b)(ii)	*Intervention* • New Zealand Welcomes the Forum Women Leaders' Meeting's call for renewed commitment to increasing women's political leadership and representation. We also welcome the Women Leader's renewed push to prevent gender-based violence. • We support these Forum-led priorities, recognising their importance to stronger institutions, resilient communities and a more secure and prosperous region. s9(2)(g)(i)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	
	2050 STRATEGY THEMATIC AREA: RESOURCES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
11.	**Forum Trade Ministers Meeting** *(9:30am – 9:45am)* s6(b)(ii)	Note: Forum Trade officials received an update on the Pacific Trade Invest (PTI) Beijing office. s6(a) Since FTOM, China's Special Envoy for Pacific Island Countries Affairs, Mr Qian Bo, has confirmed US$1.08 million in funding for the PTI Beijing office, PTI Network activities, and broader Forum priorities. *Labour Mobility (If raised)*

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	• New Zealand recognises the value of a regular dedicated Labour Ministers Meeting (LMM) as a regional platform for political oversight and co-ordination on labour and workforce governance. However, it's imperative it's situated within the broader Pacific Islands Forum architecture, noting that labour mobility is already substantively covered under Forum Trade Ministers, with support from Forum Economic Ministers. • New Zealand considers the Review of Regional Architecture the appropriate channel for further consideration of an LMM, ensuring any new mechanism is complementary to and strengthens the existing regional architecture. • s6(a) • New Zealand welcomed Leaders' endorsement of the Pacific Regional Labour Mobility Principles (PRLMP), which provide an important, non-binding framework for strengthening regional labour mobility cooperation and a valuable reference point for good practice across the region. New Zealand supports a light-touch approach to implementation that complements, rather than cuts across, national arrangements. *Kava Declaration (from FFMM Officials Brief)* • New Zealand is pleased to **support the endorsement of the Kava Declaration**. We recognise the importance of kava to the Pacific region as a sacred cultural heritage passed down through generations, and as a crop with significant economic potential. Kava can play an important role in strengthening Pacific economies, expanding export opportunities, and supporting livelihoods across the region.
12.	**Pacific Labour Ministers Meeting**	*Intervention*

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	• New Zealand thanks Fiji for hosting the inaugural Pacific Labour Ministers Meeting (PLMM) in May and acknowledges the substantial work and good progress made in developing a draft PLMM Charter, Just Work Action Plan, and business case for a regular PLMM within the broader Forum architecture. • As this work progresses, New Zealand welcomes broader engagement across the membership, including those not represented at the Nadi meeting. It is important that this process that reflects the collective interests and perspectives of all members. • New Zealand recognises the value of a regular PLMM as a platform for regional oversight and coordination on labour and workforce issues. As this proposal develops, we want to ensure it complements existing Pacific Islands Forum processes, especially to ensure we are making the most of our regional resources. New Zealand looks forward to these proposals being further considered by Leaders through the Review of Regional Architecture process. • s6(a)
13.	**2026 Forum Economic Ministers Meeting** *(10:15am – 10:45pm)* s6(b)(ii)	*MFA intervention* ▪ As we look around our region, it is clear that our most immediate challenges all have serious economic implications. We are living in a time of global uncertainty. Inflationary pressures, supply chain disruptions, infrastructure deficits, and tighter budgets are reshaping how we work. ▪ The **fuel crisis** is a stark reminder that our region remains vulnerable to events outside of our control.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
		• However, as a region we are remarkably resilient. We have always known that our strength in addressing these shared challenges comes from our unity. • We were pleased by our Leaders' decision to invoke the Biketawa Declaration and welcome the update from the **Regional Response Mechanism.** • This is an excellent example of **the Forum delivering on its core purpose** – to strengthen regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security. • We have already spoken to the need to take a regional approach to security. But to secure our economic future, we also believe there is benefit in deepening regional economic integration. • But if we are serious about facing these problems together, we need to do more. We must give more thought to shared standards, regulatory systems, and aligning of our own national policies. • As New Zealand prepares to join the Troika, and as we look ahead to our hosting of the **57th Pacific Islands Leader Meeting,** it is this purpose which will guide us.
	Morning Tea Break *(10.45am – 11.00am)*	
	2050 STRATEGY THEMATIC AREA: CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTERS	
14.	**Pacific Climate Change Ministers Meeting** *(11:00am – 11:30am)* s6(b)(ii)	*Intervention* • New Zealand continues to stand with our Pacific partners on this issue which is of critical importance to the region. • New Zealand has been actively working with fellow PIF members to promote our regionally held positions on **sea-level rise,** including in the upcoming UN political declaration on sea-level rise.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	• New Zealand also welcomes Australia's close partnering with Pacific Islands Forum members ahead of the **Pacific Pre-COP**, and Fiji and Tuvalu's hosting. • The Pre-COP in Fiji and special Leaders' event in Tuvalu will be important opportunities for the world to see the impacts of climate change in the Pacific first-hand and to highlight Pacific leadership. • New Zealand is committed to working together to secure global support for the Pacific Resilience Facility. We want to continue highlighting Pacific leadership on renewable energy, oceans and sea level rise. • Finally, we look forward to the upcoming **Leaders' Ascent Dialogue** and to a successful Pre-COP that delivers for our region.
15.	**6th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting (PRETMM)** (11:30am – 12:00pm) s6(b)(ii)	*Intervention* • New Zealand welcomed the emphasis on shifting from commitments to implementation at the **6th Pacific Regional Energy & Transport Ministers Meeting**, recognising the need for stronger co-ordination across our Blue Continent. • Transforming the Pacific's ambition into accelerated action will require strengthened regional leadership, coordination and accountability of implementation efforts across the renewable energy sector. New Zealand Renewable Energy Project in Niue. • "The **Niue Renewable Energy project** significantly upgrades the Niue electricity network to increase safety and resilience. Sunergise has implemented the project, alongside the utility, Niue Power Corporation (NPC). • The project has been delivered at a critical time, as global fuel supply chains face ongoing disruption and accelerated costs due to the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz. It is now in the final stages of commissioning; and is estimated to provide savings of approximately NZD6500-8950/day on imported diesel for electricity generation."

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	• **Once fully operational, the Renewable Energy Project will enable Niue to reach 80% in renewable electricity generation** • [If the Renewable Energy Commissioner is raised]: We welcome the establishment of a **Renewable Energy Commissioner** for the Pacific and the ongoing efforts to finalise the Terms of Reference, ahead of consideration by PIF Leaders in Palau.
	Lunch Break (12.00pm – 1.00pm)	
	2050 STRATEGY THEMATIC AREA: OCEAN AND ENVIRONMENT	
16.	**Fisheries Ministers Meeting** (1:00pm – 1:30pm) s6(b)(ii)	*Intervention* • New Zealand is pleased to endorse the Vakamanu Strategy. The strategy will be an important guide for future management of coastal and oceanic fisheries and aquaculture." • New Zealand was delighted to host your Ministers and officials for the FFC Ministerial and RFMM. New Zealand supports the FFA Secretariat's work to put the organisation on a more sustainable financial footing. New Zealand is pleased that Ministers endorsed the proposed funding options to address the FFA's budget deficit. We agree the Secretariat must cut its costs, but we also see the need to strengthen revenue in some areas, particularly where member contributions or fees have been frozen for some years. • s6(b)(i)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
		• s6(b)(i) If raised: Tokelau fisheries • New Zealand is fully supportive of Tokelau's efforts to regain its participation in the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Vessel Day Scheme. • There has been no change in the management of Tokelau's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and offshore fisheries that would prevent Tokelau participating in the scheme. • While New Zealand remains responsible for Tokelau's EEZ under international law, Tokelau has consistently managed the day-to-day operation of its offshore fisheries within the EEZ. This has not changed."
17.	**Ocean Governance and Priorities** *(1:30pm – 2:00pm)* s6(b)(ii)	*Intervention* • We also support the Pacific Islands Forum **Leaders Ocean Statement**. It is important that our Leaders provide a clear description of our position on Ocean issues in key global events. • New Zealand is pleased to have contributed to the RV Pasifika project, along with Australia, the United States, and the Republic of Korea. • We are unlikely to be able to contribute further funds to the project; however, we continue to work with SPC to identify potential sources of additional funding. *On Sea Level Rise* • s6(b)(i)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
		• s6(b)(i) *On BBNJ* • *New Zealand supports Australia's proposed amendments to the call for ratification and effective implementation of the BBNJ Agreement.* • *[If needed] New Zealand agrees with AUS on the need to reflect Article 7 of the BBNJ Agreement, by inserting the words "is guided by the principle of equity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits".* • *[If needed] New Zealand agrees with AUS on the need to delete the words "guarantees … and related technologies" in order to accurately reflect the BBNJ Agreement, which provides for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from marine genetic resources but does not "guarantee" particular outcomes.* *On Maritime Boundaries* • s9(2)(f)(iv) • s9(2)(f)(iv) s9(2)(h)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
		On Plastic Pollution in the Marine Environment s9(2)(f)(iv)
	2050 STRATEGY THEMATIC AREA: TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY	
18.	**Forum Information, Communication and Technology Ministers Meeting** *(2:30pm – 2:30pm)* s6(b)(ii)	*Intervention* • New Zealand was pleased to take part in the inaugural Pacific Islands Forum ICT Ministers Meeting in Port Moresby last month. We approach the accelerating pace of digital transformation across the Pacific with clear eyed realism. The opportunities are significant, but so are the risks. • That is why we welcomed the endorsement of the Pacific Digital and AI Technology Principles, which place resilience, transparency, and Pacific values at the centre of our region's approach to digital technologies and artificial intelligence. • New Zealand continues to support greater connectivity in the Pacific, including through investments in submarine cable infrastructure, digital skills development to harness the digital economy, and cyber security cooperation with Pacific partners. We look forward to continuing our work with Forum Members to deliver practical outcomes for Pacific peoples.
	Afternoon Tea Break (2:30pm – 3:00pm)	
	Country Papers	
19.	**Update on the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings** *(3:00pm – 3:30pm)* s6(b)(ii)	*Mark – to note on the Leaders Ascent Dialogue this is open to "All Meeting Delegates, Special Guests and Invited Guests"* s6(a)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	Verbal Update	
20.	**Country Papers** *3:30pm – 4:00pm)*	
1.	s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)	Bottom line: New Zealand supports Divs objective/advice for handling: Show support for the Pact Talking points: None provided s9(2)(f)(iv) Background: This paper was discussed and received support at PIFWLM
2.	s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)	s6(a) s6(a) Talking points: • s6(b)(i) • s6(a) • s6(a) • s6(a)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
		s6(a)
3.	s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)	s9(2)(f)(iv)
4.	s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)	s9(2)(f)(iv) *Mark – assume you may want to say some words but will leave to you to craft*
5.	s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)	s6(a) s6(a) <u>Talking Points:</u> s6(b)(i)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
		• s6(b)(i) • New Zealand is a strong supporter of the Pacific Regional Framework for Climate Mobility. We have made significant development investments to support its implementation. s6(b)(i) • We support efforts to consolidate the principle of continuity of statehood and maritime zones in the face of climate change-related sea-level rise, including through s6(b)(i) the C-SET. s6(b)(i) • s6(a) • s6(a) s6(b)(i) • s6(a)
6.	s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)	s6(a)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
		Talking points: • New Zealand agrees that there is room for strengthened coordination across the UN system on oceans issues. • During the recent UN80 briefing on the Environment reform workstream, the PIF statement highlighted that "coherence, coordination and effectiveness of the UN's environmental work is therefore critical". s6(a)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
7.	s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)	s6(a)
	Closing	
	Consideration of Outcomes Document (4:30pm – 5:00pm)	
	Closing (5:30pm)	
	Taken as read	
	Report of the Secretary General	
	Report of the Consultative Committee on the Treaty of Rarotonga and Related Issues s6(b)(ii)	*Intervention recommended by ISED* • New Zealand strongly supports the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, a concrete contribution to a nuclear weapon-free world by our region. We look forward to the Treaty's Second Meeting of States Parties (and 40th anniversary) on 10 December. • We support efforts to universalise the Treaty in our region and to encourage ratification of its Protocols by the United States, the only NPT nuclear-weapon-state not yet to do so.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	• We congratulate the Kingdom of Tonga on its recent accession to the Comprehensive nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). *If required: AUKUS and the Treaty of Rarotonga:* • We recognise regional concerns about nuclear issues, and the Treaty of Rarotonga provides a good platform on which to engage with many of these. • We note that the Treaty of Rarotonga prohibits the manufacture, use, testing and possession of nuclear weapons in the South Pacific region – and not to nuclear propulsion. • s6(a)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	Report of the FOC Specialist Sub-Committee on Sea-Level Rise in relation to International Law (FSS-SLRIL) s6(b)(ii)	*LGL recommends making an intervention* • New Zealand commends Vanuatu for its work on the resolution on the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the obligations of States in respect of climate change, and its strong advocacy on behalf of Pacific Island countries. In keeping with Pacific advocacy on climate change and resilience issues, New Zealand had voted in support of this resolution. • New Zealand commends Australia for co-facilitating the negotiation process for the UNGA political declaration on sea-level rise. New Zealand has been actively working with fellow PIF members to ensure the text reflects the PIF positions. • New Zealand thanks the organisers of the Pacific Climate Justice and Sea-Level Rise Week, it was a valuable opportunity to strengthen coordination and shared experiences on this important topic. **Background** <u>Vanuatu-led resolution on ICJ Advisory Opinion</u> 1. In May 2026, the UN General Assembly adopted the Vanuatu-led resolution with a strong majority of 141 in favour, 8 against and 28 abstentions. s9(2)(g)(i) While the resolution does not fully reflect New Zealand's position on the legal issues addressed by the ICJ, we voted in favour (but did not co-sponsor). New Zealand delivered an Explanation of Vote following the adoption of the resolution, ensuring both New Zealand's legal position and support for the Pacific's leadership were on record. <u>Political declaration on sea-level rise</u> 2. To date New Zealand has engaged constructively in the declaration negotiation process, co-facilitated by Australia and Cabo Verde, including by putting forward substantive proposals, delivering national statements and joining PIF statements. New Zealand has also been working with the PIF chair to advocate and progress PIF positions throughout the informal consultations in New York.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	3. s6(a) <u>Pacific Climate Justice and Sea-Level Rise Week</u> 4. The Pacific Climate Justice and Sea-Level Rise Week held in Suva, Fiji, from 25–28 May 2026, which included the Conference on the Protection of Persons Affected by Sea-Level Rise. New Zealand was represented by LGL UM, who reported that, with many delegations stressing the need for greater implementation and practical assistance, there was real scope for increased coordination and shared learning within the region.
	The 4th Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting and Tourism Ministers Meeting s6(b)(ii)	**Background** 1. New Zealand is a significant contributor to aviation safety and security through core/programmatic support of the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO), the PIF CROP agency which provides Pacific states with technical and regulatory support and expertise. This helps Pacific states ensure safe and secure air connectivity and comply with rigorous international safety and security requirements. New Zealand has just extended funding to PASO of $1.8 per annum, for the next two years. 2. New Zealand has been providing airport security equipment, capacity building training and advisory services to regulators and airport authorities across the Pacific. In December 2025 New Zealand announced an investment of an additional $13.3 million, over the next five years to extend this programme, which services Niue, Tonga, Samoa, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Nauru. 3. New Zealand actively supports aviation infrastructure including building new runways (Solomon Islands, Niue) and helping maintain existing ones. 4. Under the RRA, there are ongoing questions about where/how PASO will be amalgamated with other CROP agencies. s6(a)

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
		5. s9(2)(g)(i)
	Ending Global Plastic Pollution in the Environment s6(b)(ii)	*Intervention* • New Zealand remains committed to working with the Pacific to address plastic pollution, particularly through the timely conclusion of the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations. • New Zealand is supportive of a unified PSIDS position in the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations, where possible, including ensuring that the Treaty recognises that Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are particularly impacted by plastic pollution; that it can be effectively implemented; and is consistent with the existing international oceans framework. • We would be interested to know what plans SPREP has for supporting the Pacific region's coordination between now and the next round of negotiations (likely March 2027). • New Zealand supports consideration of the development of a regional Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) framework that aligns with domestic legislative settings and would welcome further information or discussions on this proposal to enable us to fully consider this initiative.
	Institutional Review of the OPOC	**Intervention** "New Zealand commends OPOC for its work on the Strategic Plan. The importance of having a sustainable and future focused blueprint cannot be overstated. New Zealand is

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	comfortable with most aspects of the Strategic Plan but – as we have previously conveyed to OPOC – we think there are a few areas that warrant further consideration: 1.s6(a) 2.s6(a) 3.s6(a) We expect that these issues will be addressed in the OPOC institutional review that is currently underway. We think it would be premature to make decisions on these issues before they are considered in the institutional review."
	Regional and Strategic Environment s6(b)(ii)	*Lightly edited MFA intervention*

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	• Our region faces an increasingly **complex global environment** – one that threatens to undermine our vision for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, security, and prosperity. • As Members, we are stewards of this shared vision. We must be ambitious in our efforts to support the livelihoods of our peoples. We must continue to advocate for, and protect, our **Ocean of Peace.** • New Zealand has shared with Forum members our strong concerns about **China's recent testing of a nuclear-capable missile** into our nuclear free zone with virtually no notice. This latest launch, following one in 2024, goes against the intent and purpose of the Ocean of Peace Declaration and the Treaty of Rarotonga. • These texts are a fundamental statement of who we are as a region. We must be prepared to speak up when others take actions that undermine our shared interests and values. Such actions cannot be accepted as 'normal'. • In our view, we need to make clear our collective expectations of our partners, as we have done recently in response to the Middle East conflict with the Appeal for Global Peace. • This is our immediate objective. But more is required to secure our region as an Ocean of Peace. We must think long term. • This is why combatting regional and domestic threats from **transnational, serious and organised crime** is a priority for New Zealand. It is important our domestic agencies including Customs and Police are working together on these issues. • This year we announced a $10m investment to help address social harm from drugs in the Pacific. We have also commenced work to disrupt drug trafficking in our region and we look forward to coordinating with others to combat this issue. • The **Waqa Moana (*Wong-ga Moana*)** countering organised crime initiative provides a useful coordinating mechanism, and we thank Fiji for enabling this regional response.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
		• We also applaud the leadership of our Chair, Prime Minister Wale of Solomon Islands, on regional security issues. • We look forward to participating in further discussions – with you our fellow Members and as an incoming Troika member – on how we as a region can continue working together to secure our future.
	Human Development s6(b)(ii)	*Intervention* • The challenges confronting the Pacific reinforce the importance of investing in people. New Zealand supports efforts to advance health, education, early childhood development, and wellbeing across the region. Investments in these sectors are essential foundations for stronger economies, resilient communities, and a more sustainable future.

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No.	Agenda Item	Suggested Interventions
	s6(b)(ii)	

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ARSC Paper – Breakdown of Recommendations and Positions	
Report of the Audit and Risk Sub-Committee *(10:00am – 10:30am)* s6(b)(ii)	
Recommendations	**Positions**
s6(b)(ii)	Note.
s6(b)(ii)	Note.
s6(b)(ii)	Adopt.

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s6(b)(ii)	
s6(b)(ii)	New Zealand takes note of the Primary Budget financials [**if comfortable/raised by others in the room:**] and reiterates the importance of securing the Secretariat's financial position. This is our Forum and our Secretariat, and we all derive the benefits from it. We encourage all members to consider how they can bolster support to the Secretariat including by ensuring that any outstanding payments and contributions are paid. ***Context*** s6(a), s6(b)(ii)

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	s6(a), s6(b)(ii)
s6(b)(ii)	New Zealand has a number of issues we seek clarity on before adopting these recommendations: • s9(2)(f)(iv) *Context* s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv)

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s6(b)(ii)	s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv) *Context* s9(2)(f)(iv) While New Zealand can ultimately go with the membership on accepting this Budget, s9(2)(g)(i)
s6(b)(ii)	Note.
s6(b)(ii)	Will Review.
s6(b)(ii)	Note.

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s6(b)(ii)	
s6(b)(ii)	Endorse – New Zealand sees the value of strengthening and enhancing the prospect of the Extra Budget to offset and respond to the pressures on the Secretariat. The paper identifies issues of concern and we look forward to these being resolved as swiftly as possible.
s6(b)(ii)	Note – some serious issues here that we look forward to being appraised of as they are resolved by 31 December.

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s6(b)(ii)	
s6(b)(ii)	Note.
s6(b)(ii)	Note.
s6(b)(ii)	Note.

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s6(b)(ii)	
s6(b)(ii)	Note.
s6(b)(ii)	Note.
s6(b)(ii)	Note.

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s6(b)(ii)	
s6(b)(ii)	Note.
s6(b)(ii)	Note.

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NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
RT HON WINSTON PETERS

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING

7 August 2026



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AGENDA AND OVERVIEW

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Agenda

1. Opening (9:30am – 9:40am)

   The Chair will call the meeting to order and opening formalities will be observed.

2. Adoption of Agenda and Meeting Timetable (9:40am – 9:45am)

3. Regional and Strategic Landscape (9:45am – 10:15am)

   To consider and discuss the evolving regional and global strategic context and positioning the Pacific region to effectively navigate emerging opportunities and challenges, drawing on the discussions and reflections from relevant sectoral meetings also. s6(a)

4. Political Leadership and Regionalism (10:15am – 11:00am)

   To consider and provide guidance on the progress of implementation on the 2050 Strategy, the Review of the Regional Architecture, as well as the ongoing work to strengthen how the region can engages and advocates internationally. To also consider and discuss the Report of the Regional Response Mechanism that was established following the trigger of the Biketawa Declaration and the SG's Report on the Treaty of Rarotonga and related developments.

MORNING TEA (11:00am – 11:30am)

5. Peace and Security (11:30am – 12:30pm)

   To consider and provide guidance on the progress of key regional initiatives including: the Peace and Security Action Plan, the *Waqa Moana* concept to address transnational crime and drugs, Regional Peace and Security Governance and the integrated Regional Security Response Mechanism. s6(a)

6. People Centred Development (12:30pm – 1:00pm)

   To consider and provide guidance on the key regional initiatives being progressed within this thematic area, in particular the *Refreshed Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, an update on Non-Communicable Diseases in the region as well as the progress on the implementation of the *Pacific Regional Education Framework*.

7. Ocean and Environment (1:00pm – 1:30pm)

   To consider and provide guidance on the progress of key Oceans Priorities, with a particular focus on the draft Leaders Statement of Oceans.

LUNCH (1:30pm – 2:30pm)

8. Resources and Economic Development (2:30pm – 3:00pm)

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To note and consider the key regional initiatives being progressed within this thematic area, in particular the advocacy on the *Pacific Resilience Facility* in the lead up to the pledging event at COP31.

9. Climate Change and Disasters (3:00pm – 3:30pm)

   To note and consider the progress of preparations for COP 31, the Pre-COP 31 meetings to be hosted in the Pacific region, as well as the guidance provided by Climate Change Ministers on these matters.

10. Technology and Connectivity (3:30pm – 4:00pm)

    To note and consider the key regional initiatives progressed within this thematic area, in particular the *Pacific Digital and AI Technology Principles*.

AFTERNOON TEA (4:00pm – 4:30pm; s6(a)

11. Update on the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings (4:30pm – 5:00pm)

    To note an update on the preparations for the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings in 2026.

12. Other Matters (5:00pm – 5:30pm)

13. Consideration of Outcomes Document (5:30pm – 6:00pm)

14. Closing (6:00pm)

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Overview and Objectives

Time and Date: 9am-6pm, Friday, 7 August

Attendees: Chair, Solomon Islands Foreign Minister Rick Hou, supported by Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General Baron Waqa. Most Foreign Ministers are expected to attend, including Senator Wong, and Kiribati President Maamau (in his Foreign Minister capacity).

Attire: Pacific Formal (bula shirt provided).

Meeting Purpose: the Foreign Ministers Meeting shapes the agenda for the Leaders Meeting. Ministers also coordinate regional responses on priority matters such as regional security, climate and economic resilience, ocean governance, and sustainable development.

Key Objectives: with New Zealand's hosting of PIF Leaders in 2027 in mind, we suggest three key objectives:

- **Advancing discussions on the Forum's Partnerships Mechanism**: s6(a)

- **Agreeing a regional response to China's missile launch:** China's launch of an unarmed ballistic missile into the Pacific on 6 July is at odds with the intent and purpose of the Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace Declaration and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. s6(a)

- Promoting greater regional connectivity and integration: the fuel crisis is only the latest economic setback impacting the region. It is important to return to the Forum's central purpose – strengthening regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security. s9(2)(f)(iv)

We provide three recommended interventions to support these objectives. For other agenda items, interventions are not essential.

s6(a)

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INTERVENTIONS

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Intervention: Agenda item 3: Regional and Strategic Landscape

To deliver after the chair has spoken

- Warm Pacific greetings to our Chair, the Honourable Rick Hou (*"Ho"* - or full name, Houenipwela – *Ho-en-ip-weller)* – it is a pleasure to see you in the Chair. Your Excellency President Maamau, fellow Foreign Ministers, the Secretary General and to all who join us today.
- Our region faces an increasingly complex global environment – one that threatens to undermine our vision for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, security, and prosperity.
- As Ministers, we are stewards of this shared vision. We must be ambitious in our efforts to support the livelihoods of our peoples. We must continue to advocate for, and protect, our Ocean of Peace.
- New Zealand has shared with Forum members our strong concerns about **China's** recent testing of a nuclear-capable missile into our nuclear free zone with virtually no notice. This latest launch, following one in 2024, goes against the intent and purpose of the Ocean of Peace Declaration and the Treaty of Rarotonga.
- These texts are a fundamental statement of who we are as a region. We must be prepared to speak up when others take actions that undermine our shared interests and values. Such actions cannot be accepted as 'normal'.
- In our view, we need to make clear our collective expectations of our partners, as we have done recently in response to the Middle East conflict with the Appeal for Global Peace.
- This is our immediate objective. But more is required to secure our region as an Ocean of Peace. We must think long term.
- This is why combatting regional and domestic threats from transnational, serious and organised crime is a priority for New Zealand. It is important our domestic agencies including Customs and Police are working together on these issues.
- This year we announced a $10m investment to help address social harm from drugs in the Pacific. We have also commenced work to disrupt drug trafficking in our region and we look forward to coordinating with others to combat this issue.
- The Waqa Moana (***Wong-ga Moana)*** countering organised crime initiative provides a useful coordinating mechanism, and we thank Fiji for enabling this regional response.
- In this context, New Zealand also acknowledges the role of Pacific Police Ministers.
- We also applaud the leadership of our Chair, Prime Minister Wale of Solomon Islands, on regional security issues.
- We look forward to participating in further discussions on how we as a region can continue working together to secure our future.

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Intervention: Agenda item 4: Political Leadership and Regionalism

To deliver after the chair has spoken

- ***[If not covered at the Ministerial Retreat]*** *At our meeting last year, we observed an international environment under serious strain.*
- *That underlines the importance of the Forum's partners. In a time of economic and global uncertainty, we need to keep our partners close.*
- *This means we need to finalise the* ***Forum Dialogue Partnership Mechanism*** *in Palau. Strong partnerships support our region's security and prosperity. They also help to hold Partners to account on the things that matter to us.*
- *We are looking for two things from this process:*
    - *We must improve engagement for both Forum Members and our Partners. We need structured, high-quality engagement with all our Partners, irrespective of status.*
    - *The process must keep the Forum in the driving seat. It is critical Partners respect our collective priorities and procedures.*
- s6(a)
- *While all change presents risk, there is greater risk in doing nothing. Continued inaction risks disincentivising Partners and pushing them out.*
- *The spirit of hospitality runs deep in our Pacific region, as does respect. We have seen this balance work for others, including through our own experience as a partner of ASEAN. New Zealand is committed to seeing it work here too.*

- New Zealand supports a **regional approach to international candidatures.** We commend Palau and Samoa for your elections to the Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and to Kiribati for your election to the Commission on the Status of Women.

- We commend for your consideration the re-election of **Dr Penelope Ridings to the International Law Commission** for the term 2028 to 2032. The work of the Commission does much to safeguard our region, including through its work on sea-level rise in relation to international law.

- As an expert in international law, a former High Commissioner to Samoa, and with over 40 years of experience in Pacific issues, Dr Ridings is well positioned to ensure the Commission progresses international law in a way which recognises Pacific interests.

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Intervention: Agenda item 8: Resources and Economic Development

To deliver after the chair has spoken

- As we look around our region, it is clear that our most immediate challenges all have serious economic implications. We are living in a time of global uncertainty. Inflationary pressures, supply chain disruptions, infrastructure deficits, and tighter budgets are reshaping how we work.
- The fuel crisis is a stark reminder that our region remains vulnerable to events outside of our control.
- However, as a region we are remarkably resilient. We have always known that our strength in addressing these shared challenges comes from our unity.
- We were pleased by our Leaders' decision to invoke the Biketawa Declaration and welcome the update from the Regional Response Mechanism.
- This is an excellent example of the Forum delivering on its core purpose – to strengthen regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security.
- We have already spoken to the need to take a regional approach to security. But to secure our economic future, we also believe there is benefit in deepening regional economic integration.
- If we are serious about facing these problems together, we need to do more. We must give more thought to shared standards, regulatory systems, and aligning of our own national policies.
- As New Zealand prepares to join the Troika, and as we look ahead to our hosting of the 56th Pacific Islands Leader Meeting, it is this purpose which will guide us.

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EVENT BRIEF AND BILATERALS

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Event Brief – Ministerial Retreat Breakfast on Partnerships Mechanism

Time and date: 8am, Friday, 7 August 2026

Objectives

- To maximise the chances of finalising decisions in Palau on the tiering/streaming of Pacific Islands Forum Partners s6(a) including an improved process which delivers for both Partners and Forum Members alike.
- s6(a)

Participants

- Heads of Delegation for the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting plus one.

Speaking notes

- At our meeting last year, we observed an international environment under serious strain.
- That underlines the importance of the Forum's partners. In a time of economic and global uncertainty, we need to keep our partners close.
- This means we need to finalise the Forum Dialogue Partnership Mechanism in Palau. Strong partnerships support our region's security and prosperity. They also help to hold Partners to account on the things that matter to us.
- We are looking for two things from this process:
    - We must improve engagement for both Forum Members and our Partners. We need structured, high-quality engagement with all our Partners, irrespective of status.
    - The process must keep the Forum in the driving seat. It is critical Partners respect our collective priorities and procedures.
- s6(a)
- While all change presents risk, there is greater risk in doing nothing. Continued inaction risks disincentivising Partners and pushing them out.
- The spirit of hospitality runs deep in our Pacific region, as does respect. We have seen this balance work for others, including through our own experience as a partner of ASEAN. New Zealand is committed to seeing it work here too.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
- Dress code: Pacific Formal (bula shirt and dress trousers)
- Accompanying official: Mark Ramsden, Divisional Manager Pacific Regional

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Australia: Foreign Minister Penny Wong

Time and date: *Pull aside*



You last engaged in the margins of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meetings in Manila last month. This is likely to be your last face-to-face meeting with Minster Wong before the election.

Key Messages

- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Fiji: Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade Sakiasi Ditoka

Time and date: *Pull aside*



Hon Sakiasi Ditoka [*ndee-tok-a*] has previously served as Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management, where he contributed to organising Fiji's humanitarian response to Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle. He has had a distinguished career in both the military and civil service, having served in international peacekeeping roles alongside holding leadership positions.

You last met Minister Ditoka on 16 July, when you signed the refreshed Duavata Partnership with Ditoka before a working lunch.

Key Messages

- Enquire into Minister Ditoka's reflections from the Future of Investment and Trade Partnership (FIT-P) Ministerial meeting he attended in Auckland. Encourage Fiji's membership of FIT-P alongside PACER Plus.
- Reiterate New Zealand's interest in exploring membership of the Ocean of Peace Alliance and welcome Minister Ditoka's views on next steps from Fiji's perspective.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Palau: Minister of State Gustav Aitaro

Time and date: *Pull aside*



Hon Gustav Aitaro [pron: *eye-tah-row*] has been Palau's Minister of State since September 2021. Aitaro was re-appointed in early 2025 following President Whipps' landslide election victory for his second term.

You last met in Palau in January this year, over a working lunch centred on Palau's upcoming hosting of PIF.

Key Messages

- Note the importance of President Whipps' visit to New Zealand in April, the first official visit by a Palauan President, reflecting the growing strength of the New Zealand–Palau partnership.
- Note New Zealand has since disbursed NZ$2.2 million as grant funding to support economic reform in Palau, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank. Reiterate our ongoing desire to support Palau in this space.
- s6(a)
- Wish Palau luck for their upcoming hosting of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, noting you will attend, along with the Prime Minister. Emphasise that New Zealand is excited about working more closely with Palau in the lead up to our own hosting – including as a fellow member of the Forum Troika from September.
- s6(a)

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Kiribati: President of the Republic of Kiribati, Taneti Maamau

Time and date: *Pull aside*



H.E. Taneti Maamau s6(a), s9(2)(a)

You last met with President Maamau at UNGA in September 2025. President Maamau met with Prime Minister Luxon at the PIF Leaders Meeting in September 2025.

Key Messages

- Welcome the efforts underway to implement the *Te Mauri Dialogue*, including to establish a Task Force in Kiribati and to schedule High Level Consultations between officials.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Tonga: Minister for His Majesty's Diplomatic Services, HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala

Time and date: *Pull aside*



Heir to the throne **HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala** [address as: "Your Royal Highness" and subsequently "sir"]. A small bow on meeting would be respectful. The Crown Prince is Minister for His Majesty's Diplomatic Services and Minister for His Majesty's Armed Forces.

You last met him in August 2025 at last year's Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in Suva, Fiji.

Key Messages

- Welcome an official visit from the Crown Prince to New Zealand this year.
- s6(a)

- Commend Tonga's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. These important commitments show Tonga's continued leadership in promoting a safer, more peaceful and nuclear-free world.

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Vanuatu: Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and External Trade Marc Ati

Time and date: *Pull aside*



Hon Marc Ati ["*ah-tee*"] entered Parliament in 2016, representing Luganville in Santo. This is Ati's third time as Minister of Foreign Affairs (2020-2022; September 2023). s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

You last met in April 2025 in Port Vila, during the Pacific Mission.

Key Messages

- Welcome signature of the Australia-Vanuatu Nakamal Agreement last month and seek Minister Ati's reflections on it.
- s6(a)

  New Zealand and Vanuatu share our own Mauri Statement of Partnership, an existing joint statement that underpins and captures the principles underlying our relationship.
- s6(a)

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BIOGRAPHIES

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Cook Islands: Secretary of Foreign Affairs Elizabeth Wright-Koteka



Elizabeth Wright-Koteka was appointed Cook Islands Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Immigration on 1 March 2026. She is attending in place of Minister Elikana due to proximity to the Cook Islands election on 12 August. Her 34-year public service career includes roles as High Commissioner to New Zealand (2021-2023), Chief of Staff to former Prime Minister Henry Puna (2012-2017), and most recently Secretary of Infrastructure.

Key Messages:

- Highlight the importance of the New Zealand-Cook Islands Defence and Security Declaration in April, and note New Zealand is already making good on our commitment to a defence and security uplift in the Cook Islands.
- s6(a)
- Underscore New Zealand's commitment to supporting the proposed US investment in Penrhyn and our hope that arrangements can be finalised soon.

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Federated States of Micronesia: Secretary of Foreign Affairs Ricky Cantero



Hon Ricky Cantero [pron: kahn-TEH-roh] was appointed Secretary (Minister equivalent) in May 2026. Previously he served as Deputy Secretary (Chief executive) from 2019 to 2026. He is a seasoned diplomat with over 20 years of service across three administrations.

You met during your visit to FSM in August 2024, where he attended your meeting with President Simina. He also attended FFMM in August 2025 in Suva as a senior official.

Key Messages

- New Zealand's enhanced engagement in Micronesia is reflected in a strengthening partnership with FSM, including increased development support, expanded scholarship offerings, and your August 2024 visit (the first of its kind on record). FSM reinforced this momentum by appointing its first Ambassador to New Zealand, H.E. Jane Chigiyal in 2025, cross-accredited from Canberra.
- s6(a)
- Key development initiatives in FSM include NZ$4.4 million in regional support for early childhood development and safe drinking water. New Zealand also provides technical assistance through the National Oceanic Resource Management Authority to strengthen marine resource management and combat illegal fishing.
- s6(a)

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French Polynesia: Head of the Delegation for International and European Affairs, Dr Mareva Lechat-Kitalong



Dr Mareva Lechat-Kitalong ("Lur-Cha Kee-Ta-Long") is the head of the Delegation for International and European Affairs (DAIE), since 2023. The DAIE is responsible for the organisation, coordination and monitoring of relations with the European Union, the Pacific and the international community, and reports to the office of the President.

She has represented French Polynesia at the UN and in regional meetings, including as Head of Delegation for the 2025 FFMM where you would have last met her.

Key Messages

- Recall your 7-8 March visit to French Polynesia, including your meeting with President Brotherson that featured discussion on combatting transnational organised crime and responding to domestic challenges, such as energy transition, food security and economic diversification.
- s6(a)
- Ask about French Polynesia's preparations for the 2027 Pacific Games.

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Nauru /Naoero: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Russ Joseph Kun



Hon Russ Joseph Kun is the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Naoero Port Authority and Naoero Shipping Line. He was previously President of Naoero from September 2022 – October 2023 when he was replaced by current President, David Adeang, following a vote of no confidence.

You have not met before.

Key Messages

- Welcome the country's formal name-change to Naoero (NOW-ero) in late June 2026, recognising the nation's heritage and cultural identity.
- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Camilla Solomon as Naoero's first High Commissioner to New Zealand in 2025, cross-accredited from Canberra. It is encouraging to see the bilateral relationship continue to deepen and grow.
- s6(a)
- Reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to supporting Naoero's long-term economic resilience. Highlight New Zealand's contribution of NZ$1 million annually (2019–2034) to the Nauru Intergenerational Trust Fund. As of June 2026, the Fund held assets of approximately AUD$479 million.

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New Caledonia: Official Representative of New Caledonia in Fiji Dr Yves Lafoy



Dr Yves Lafoy ["EEV La-FWAH"] is the Official Representative of New Caledonia to Fiji, based at the French Embassy in Suva. Dr Lafoy has extensive regional experience and previously served as Official Representative of New Caledonia in Australia (from 2019) and New Zealand (from 2012). Prior to this, he was an adviser to the Government of New Caledonia on regional cooperation. He has played a key role in New Caledonia's engagement with the PIF, contributing to its accession as a full member in 2016. He speaks fluent English.

Key Messages

- You may wish to ask Dr Lafoy for a readout of the current situation in New Caledonia following the formation of the 19th Government of New Caledonia, noting we were pleased the elections passed largely without tensions.
- s6(a)
- Note France's commitment of €2 billion to New Caledonia in reconstruction and social support. s6(a) New Zealand is seeking to cooperate further on initiatives to improve the economic livelihoods s6(a) including follow up initiatives to the successful 2025 New Caledonia Study Tour to New Zealand.

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Niue: Secretary to Government, Peleni Talagi



As Secretary to Government, Peleni Talagi is the permanent head of the Niue Public Service and chief adviser to the Prime Minister and Cabinet. She previously held the role of Solicitor General and the Head of the Niue Financial Intelligence Unit at the Crown Law Office.

Key Messages

- Recall your recent meeting with Prime Minister Tagelagi and key issues canvassed including key NZ-funded development projects in Niue: Justice Building; and completion of the Renewable Energy project which will provide 80% of Niue's power.
- Note the success of recent High-Level Consultations between senior officials.
- s6(a)

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Papua New Guinea: Foreign Minister Justin Tkatchenko

Time and date: *Pull aside*



Hon Justin Tkatchenko was born in Australia to Ukrainian immigrants and became a Papua New Guinea citizen in 2006. He was a TV presenter as well as director of a landscaping company in Papua New Guinea before entering politics in 2012.

You last met at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in Manila in late July.

Key Messages

- Acknowledge that New Zealand's relationship with Papua New Guinea is in good shape, following a landmark 2025 that included bilateral visits by each side's Leaders. Our relationship is grounded in long-standing government-to-government cooperation; practical defence cooperation; and our significant development partnership.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- Note New Zealand has made travel more accessible for Pacific partners, including under the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme. This includes a 12-month trial of reduced visa fee and 12-month trial of NZETA for Australian visa holders travelling from Australia. The numbers of PNG RSE workers in New Zealand continue to grow (reaching a record high of 662 in the 2025/2026 season).

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Republic of the Marshall Islands: Foreign Minister Kalani Kaneko



Hon Kalani Kaneko [pron: kah-NEH-ko] has served in the role since January 2024. A member of the Nitijela (Parliament) representing Majuro Atoll, he previously served as Minister of Health and has been a strong advocate for education, healthcare, and the interests of Marshallese veterans.

You met during your visit to RMI in August 2024.

Key Messages

- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Junior Aini as the Republic of the Marshall Islands' first Ambassador to New Zealand in April 2025, cross-accredited from Suva. It is encouraging to see the bilateral relationship continue to deepen and grow
- s6(a)
- Highlight New Zealand's support to on climate-induced loss and damage, and through technical assistance to the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA) to strengthen resource management and combat illegal fishing. Emphasise New Zealand's commitment to continuing support in these areas.

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Samoa: Chief Executive of Samoa Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peseta Noumea Simi



Peseta (*pesseh-tah*) Noumea Simi has worked in Samoa's Public Service for 43 years and in her current role since 2015.

Peseta's career has been focused mainly on international relations, aid coordination, and effective development cooperation, working in the PM's Office, Ministry of Finance and Samoa's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (SMFAT). She is a very senior figure within the Samoa system, s6(a)

Key Messages

- Ask after La'aulialemalietoa's visit to New Zealand from 17-24 July alongside Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour Fata Ryan Schuster, in which he engaged with RSE workers and industry partners.
- Reiterate invitation for a full formal visit in the future.
- s6(a)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

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Solomon Islands: Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Rick Houenipwela



Hon Rick Houenipwela *(Ho-en-ip-weller)*, commonly known as Rick Hou *(Ho)*, was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade in May 2026. A former Prime Minister (2017-19), he entered politics in 2010 following a distinguished career with the Central Bank of Solomon Islands which included serving as Governor, s6(a)

He visited New Zealand as Prime Minister in 2018.

You last met with Hou when he accompanied Prime Minister Wale to New Zealand in early June.

Key Messages

- s6(a)

- Express interest in Prime Minister Wale's proposal for a Forum regional security treaty, s6(a)

- Share that, s6(b)(i) New Zealand is now offering additional support for Solomon Islands' participation in the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme. This includes up to NZD 600,000 in grant funding to the Solomon Islands Labour Mobility Unit.

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Tuvalu: Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Labour and Trade Pasuna Tuaga



Mr Pasuna Tuaga is the Permanent Secretary of the Tuvalu Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Labour and Trade. He has represented Tuvalu at major international forums, including the United Nations General Assembly and regional policy conferences, where he has advocated on issues such as climate change, migration, economic resilience, and Pacific regional cooperation.

Key Messages

- Affirm New Zealand's on-going commitment to the relationship with Tuvalu, noting our significant efforts to address key development priorities set out by the Government of Tuvalu. New Zealand is pleased to bolster economic resilience in Tuvalu through reform-linked budget support, contributions to the Tuvalu Trust Fund and comprehensive support to Tuvalu's Fisheries Department (the cornerstone of its economy).
- Welcome the Guest of Government visit to New Zealand by Prime Minister Feleti Teo, Minister Paulson and Minister Kofe in March 2026, including the signing of the renewed Statement of Partnership.
- s6(a)

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Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat: Secretary General Baron Waqa



Baron Waqa [WONG-gah] became Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in June 2024. A former President of Nauru (2013-2019), he brings deep political experience to the role. As Secretary General, he leads the Forum Secretariat and serves as Permanent Chair of the CROP agencies.

You hosted Waqa for dinner during a layover in Fiji in January 2026.

Key Messages

- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- Comment New Zealand looks forward to working more closely with the Secretary General when we step onto the Troika in September, and as host of the 56th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting.
- Note New Zealand's hosting will be guided by the Forum's central purpose - strengthening regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security.
- Ask the Secretary General about the Secretariat's plans for presenting a Hosting Agreement for New Zealand's consideration.

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NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

OFFICIAL'S BRIEF

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING

7 August 2026



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AGENDA AND OVERVIEW

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Agenda

1. **Opening** (9:30am – 9:40am)

   The Chair will call the meeting to order and opening formalities will be observed.

2. **Adoption of Agenda and Meeting Timetable** (9:40am – 9:45am)

3. **Regional and Strategic Landscape** (9:45am – 10:15am) **See suggested intervention**

   To consider and discuss the evolving regional and global strategic context and positioning the Pacific region to effectively navigate emerging opportunities and challenges, drawing on the discussions and reflections from relevant sectoral meetings also. s6(a)

   Political Leadership and Regionalism (10:15am – 11:00am) **See suggested intervention**

   To consider and provide guidance on the progress of implementation on the 2050 Strategy, the Review of the Regional Architecture, as well as the ongoing work to strengthen how the region can engages and advocates internationally. To also consider and discuss the Report of the Regional Response Mechanism that was established following the trigger of the Biketawa Declaration and the SG's Report on the Treaty of Rarotonga and related developments.

MORNING TEA (11:00am – 11:30am)

4. **Peace and Security** (11:30am – 12:30pm)

   To consider and provide guidance on the progress of key regional initiatives including: the Peace and Security Action Plan, the Waqa Moana concept to address transnational crime and drugs, Regional Peace and Security Governance and the integrated Regional Security Response Mechanism. s6(a)

5. **People Centred Development** (12:30pm – 1:00pm)

   To consider and provide guidance on the key regional initiatives being progressed within this thematic area, in particular the *Refreshed Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, an update on Non-Communicable Diseases in the region as well as the progress on the implementation of the *Pacific Regional Education Framework*.

6. **Ocean and Environment** (1:00pm – 1:30pm)

   To discuss outcomes of the Fisheries Ministers Meeting and ocean governance. Key items of interest to New Zealand include the Leaders Ocean Statement.

LUNCH (1:30pm – 2:30pm)

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7. **Resources and Economic Development** (2:30pm – 3:00pm) **See suggested intervention**

   To note and consider the key regional initiatives being progressed within this thematic area, in particular the advocacy on the Pacific Resilience Facility in the lead up to the pledging event at COP31.

8. **Climate Change and Disasters** (3:00pm – 3:30pm)

   To note and consider the progress of preparations for COP 31, the Pre-COP 31 meetings to be hosted in the Pacific region, as well as the guidance provided by Climate Change Ministers on these matters.

9. **Technology and Connectivity** (3:30pm – 4:00pm)

   To note and consider the key regional initiatives progressed within this thematic area, in particular the *Pacific Digital and AI Technology Principles*.

AFTERNOON TEA (4:00pm – 4:30pm; s6(a)

10. **Update on the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings** (4:30pm – 5:00pm)

11. **Other Matters** (5:00pm – 5:30pm)

12. **Consideration of Outcomes Document** (5:30pm – 6:00pm)

13. **Closing** (6:00pm)

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Overview and Objectives

Time and Date: 9am-6pm, Friday, 7 August (MFA departing at 4:00pm)

Attendees: Chair, Solomon Islands Foreign Minister Rick Hou, supported by PIF Secretary General Baron Waqa (see attached list). Seated in alphabetical order (i.e. between New Caledonia and Niue).

Attire: Pacific Formal (bula shirt provided).

Meeting Purpose: the Foreign Ministers Meeting shapes the agenda for the Leaders Meeting. Ministers also coordinate regional responses on priority matters such as regional security, climate and economic resilience, ocean governance, and sustainable development.

Key Objectives: with New Zealand's hosting of PIF Leaders in 2027 in mind, we suggest three key objectives:

- **Advancing discussions on the Forum's Partnerships Mechanism:** s6(a)

- **Agreeing a regional response to China's missile launch:** China's launch of an unarmed ballistic missile into the Pacific on 6 July is at odds with the intent and purpose of the Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace Declaration and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. s6(a)

- **Promoting greater regional connectivity and integration:** the fuel crisis is only the latest economic setback impacting the region. It is important to return to the Forum's central purpose – strengthening regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security. s9(2)(f)(iv)

We **provide three recommended interventions** to support these objectives. For other agenda items, interventions are not essential.

s6(a)

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LIST OF ATTENDEES

Note: Seated in alphabetical order. Foreign Ministers highlighted

Australia	Foreign Minister Hon Penny Wong
Cook Islands	Secretary of Foreign Affairs Elizabeth Wright- Koteka
Federated States of Micronesia	Secretary of Foreign Affairs Ricky Cantero
Fiji	Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade Sakiasi Ditoka
French Polynesia	Delegate for International and European Affairs Dr Mareva Lechat-Kitalong
Kiribati	President Taneti Maamau (virtual), we understand their Acting High Commissioner will be representing in person
Nauru/Naoero	Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Russ Joseph Kun
New Caledonia	Official Representative of New Caledonia in Fiji Dr Yves Lafoy
Niue	Secretary to Government Peleni Talagi
Palau	Minister of State Gustav Aitaro
Papua New Guinea	Foreign Minister Justin Tkatchenko
Republic of the Marshall Islands	Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Kalani Kaneko
Samoa	Chief Executive of Samoa Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peseta Noumea Simi
Solomon Islands (Chair)	Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade Rick Houenipwela
Tonga	Minister for His Majesty's Armed Forces and Diplomatic Services, HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala
Tuvalu	Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Labour and Trade Pasuna Tuaga
Vanuatu	Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and External Trade Marc Ati

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AGENDA ITEMS

The following briefs are for items on the formal meeting agenda.

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Agenda item 3: Regional and Strategic Landscape (9:45am)

Handling Advice

We recommend an intervention under this item.

Recommended intervention

- Warm Pacific greetings to our Chair, the Honourable Rick Hou (*"Ho"* - or full name, Houenipwela – *Ho-en-ip-weller)* – it is a pleasure to see you in the Chair. Your Excellency President Maamau, fellow Foreign Ministers, the Secretary General and to all who join us today.
- Our region faces an increasingly **complex global environment** – one that threatens to undermine our vision for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, security, and prosperity.
- As Ministers, we are stewards of this shared vision. We must be ambitious in our efforts to support the livelihoods of our peoples. We must continue to advocate for, and protect, our **Ocean of Peace.**
- New Zealand has shared with Forum members our strong concerns about **China's recent testing of a nuclear-capable missile** into our nuclear free zone with virtually no notice. This latest launch, following one in 2024, goes against the intent and purpose of the Ocean of Peace Declaration and the Treaty of Rarotonga.
- These texts are a fundamental statement of who we are as a region. We must be prepared to speak up when others take actions that undermine our shared interests and values. Such actions cannot be accepted as 'normal'.
- In our view, we need to make clear our collective expectations of our partners, as we have done recently in response to the Middle East conflict with the Appeal for Global Peace.
- This is our immediate objective. But more is required to secure our region as an Ocean of Peace. We must think long term.
- This is why combatting regional and domestic threats from **transnational, serious and organised crime** is a priority for New Zealand. It is important our domestic agencies including Customs and Police are working together on these issues.
- This year we announced a $10m investment to help address social harm from drugs in the Pacific. We have also commenced work to disrupt drug trafficking in our region and we look forward to coordinating with others to combat this issue.
- The **Waqa Moana (*Wong-ga Moana)*** countering organised crime initiative provides a useful coordinating mechanism, and we thank Fiji for enabling this regional response.

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- In this context, New Zealand also acknowledges the role of **Pacific Police Ministers.**
- We also applaud the leadership of our Chair, Prime Minister Wale of Solomon Islands, on regional security issues.
- We look forward to participating in further discussions – with you our fellow Ministers and as an incoming Troika member – on how we as a region can continue working

New Zealand's Position

PRC Missile Launch

- Following China's 6 July launch of a long-range nuclear capable ballistic missile into the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone, s6(a)

  this is a valuable chance to agree a regional response.

Proposal for a Pacific-wide security agreement

- s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)

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Agenda item 4: Political Leadership and Regionalism (10:15am)

Handling Advice

We recommend an intervention under this item.

Recommended intervention

- ***[If not covered at the Ministerial Retreat]*** *At our meeting last year, we observed an international environment under serious strain.*
- *That underlines the importance of the Forum's partners. In a time of economic and global uncertainty, we need to keep our partners close.*
- *This means we need to finalise the* ***Forum Dialogue Partnership Mechanism*** *in Palau. Strong partnerships support our region's security and prosperity. They also help to hold Partners to account on the things that matter to us.*
- *We are looking for two things from this process:*
    - *We must improve engagement for both Forum Members and our Partners. We need structured, high-quality engagement with all our Partners, irrespective of status.*
    - *The process must keep the Forum in the driving seat. It is critical Partners respect our collective priorities and procedures.*
- *Each of us will, understandably, focus on seeing key partners included in the Strategic stream. The trick will be to ensure membership of this stream is large enough to include all those who are truly important to our region, but not so large as it undermines the quality of the dialogue.*
- *While all change presents risk, there is greater risk in doing nothing. Continued inaction risks disincentivising Partners and pushing them out.*
- *The spirit of hospitality runs deep in our Pacific region, as does respect. We have seen this balance work for others, including through our own experience as a partner of ASEAN. New Zealand is committed to seeing it work here too.*

- New Zealand supports a **regional approach to international candidatures.** We commend Palau and Samoa for your elections to the Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and to Kiribati for your election to the Commission on the Status of Women.

- We commend for your consideration the re-election of **Dr Penelope Ridings to the International Law Commission** for the term 2028 to 2032. The work of the Commission does much to safeguard our region, including through its work on sea-level rise in relation to international law.

- As an expert in international law, a former High Commissioner to Samoa, and with over 40 years of experience in Pacific issues, Dr Ridings is well positioned to ensure the Commission progresses international law in a way which recognises Pacific interests

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New Zealand's Position

2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

- New Zealand strongly supports the 2050 Strategy as the region's collective vision for the future. We welcome the focus on regional integration and the strategic opportunities it presents to bind our region more closely together.

Forum Dialogue Partnership Mechanism Reform

- New Zealand's position to date has been to advocate for improvements to how the Forum engages with its Partners. This includes making decisions on streaming/tiering to uphold the credibility of the Forum and its processes s6(a)

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

International Engagement and Advocacy

- In a world where the multilateral system and rules-based order on which our region depends are under strain, collective advocacy is essential to protecting Pacific priorities and amplifying voices.

- New Zealand welcomes progress on the Regional Mechanism for the Selection and Appointment of Regional Candidatures to International Bodies. s6(a)

- New Zealand is seeking Forum endorsement for Dr. Penelope Riding's re-election to the International Law Commission for the term 2028-2032.

Fuel crisis

- New Zealand remains concerned about the impact of the fuel crisis on both the people and governments of Pacific countries. Support measures implemented by governments place them under significant fiscal strain, particularly as fuel prices remain elevated for longer, while responses have been often too broad and poorly targeted.

- We support the work of the Regional Response Mechanism, noting that the findings of the Fuel Security Assessment have indicated that regional responses may have limited impact given Pacific countries' unique contexts and structural features. We remain unconvinced that a regional escalation framework would provide value. There is merit, however, in continuing a regional fuel security monitoring programme.

Nuclear issues

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- New Zealand strongly supports the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, a concrete contribution to a nuclear weapon-free world by our region. We look forward to the Treaty's Second Meeting of States Parties on 10 December.
- We support efforts to universalise the Treaty in our region and to encourage ratification of its Protocols by the United States, the only NPT nuclear-weapon-state not yet to do so.
- New Zealand strongly supports efforts to progress tackling historical nuclear legacy issues in the Pacific, created by nuclear testing by France, UK and US.
- New Zealand does this in several ways – through the CROP Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues in the Pacific, through membership of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and relevant international resolutions.

New Caledonia

- New Zealand's consistent position is that New Caledonia's institutional future cannot be resolved without France. New Zealand continues to reiterate the importance of dialogue among all political representatives in New Caledonia to achieve enduring peace and stability.

Papua

- New Zealand's consistent policy is that Papua is the sovereign territory of the Republic of Indonesia.
- New Zealand raises human rights concerns with Indonesia bilaterally where relevant.
- In the 2025 PIF Leaders' Communique - the most recent with language on Papua - Leaders reaffirmed recognition of Indonesia's sovereignty over Papua. s6(a)

Bougainville

- New Zealand supports a mutually agreed post-referendum process that upholds the Bougainville Peace Agreement and the stability and peace it has enabled.

Background

Forum Dialogue Partner reform

1. s6(a)

2. While an exact number is ultimately the discretion of Leaders, s6(a)

. This is to meet the primary aim of improving Partner engagement with Leaders, while also working towards constructive engagement with all Partners throughout the year.

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3. s6(a)

International Engagement and Advocacy

4. Despite growing Pacific leadership on global priorities, Pacific Island countries remain significantly under-represented in international bodies limiting the region's ability to influence global norms and policy decisions that directly affect Pacific peoples. The Regional Mechanism for the Selection and Appointment of Regional Candidatures to International Bodies, endorsed by Leaders, addresses this gap through a coordinated regional approach to international candidatures. Members have agreed officials should recommend candidatures to Foreign Ministers for endorsement.

Fuel crisis

5. The Pacific region is exceptionally vulnerable to oil shocks due to the near total dependence on imported fuel. While supply has remained resilient, the immediate impact has been a price shock, worsened by major sectors (electricity, fisheries, health, retail, shipping, tourism) being underpinned by the price of fuel. Even if fuel prices return to a normal level in the short-term, the economic and social cost of the crisis will be significant as some countries have used their fiscal space to respond to the crisis and economic impacts (e.g., lower growth and increased inflation) are already observed.

6. A Regional Response Mechanism was formally activated on 22 May 2026. Through this, the PIFS and CROP development partners were tasked with monitoring developments, strengthening regional data collection and analysis, assessing emerging risks, refining findings of a regional Fuel Security Assessment, and informing members of regional solutions.

7. The Fuel Security Assessment provided valuable information about the vulnerability of the region and the specific circumstances and challenges of each Pacific country. The assessment highlighted that countries are best placed to manage the trade-offs across energy security, affordability, and sustainability according to their own context and circumstances.

Nuclear issues

8. New Zealand remains an engaged member of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues in the Pacific. This taskforce was established to deliver on PIF Leaders' 2019 decision to address the ongoing impacts of nuclear testing in the Pacific, with a primary focus on impacts in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Kiribati. It comprises Fiji, Kiribati, RMI and New Zealand with support from the PIF Secretariat and CROP agencies

9. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

PHF, a New Zealand Crown Research Institute is carrying out the review with a focus on the Runit Dome in RMI. PHF's report may be completed before Foreign Ministers meet.

Papua

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10. s6(a)

Papua has featured yearly on the PIF Leaders' agenda. New Zealand supported the 2019 Pacific Islands Forum's call for a visit to Papua by the Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights to provide an independent assessment, but this was not progressed. The UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Rights visited Papua in July 2025, but in an unofficial capacity.

11. Indonesia currently holds a seat on the Human Rights Council and the rotating presidency of the Council for 2026. New Zealand participated in Indonesia's Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council in 2022 and recommended that Indonesia uphold its human rights obligations in respect of Papua.

12. s6(a)

Bougainville

13. Prime Minister James Marape has announced publicly that National Parliament will vote on the Bougainville independence referendum result by 30 August 2026 - the 25th anniversary of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. s6(a)

14. s6(a)

15. s6(a)

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Agenda item 5: Peace and Security (11:30am)

s9(2)(f)(iv)

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New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand strongly supports the Forum as the apex of the regional security architecture and the role of Foreign Ministers in discussing regional security issues.
- New Zealand supports shared solutions to regional security problems, including trans-national crime, nuclear issues, and defence and security priorities.

Background

Stronger nuclear language

1. New Zealand is working with other Forum Members to develop stronger language on nuclear issues for the 2026 PIF Leaders' Statement following the failure of the 2026 Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference. s6(a)

Transnational Crime

2. New Zealand has commenced Operation KIWA, the New Zealand Customs, New Zealand Defence Force and the Government Communications Security Bureau initiative to improve coordination on countering trans-national crime, particularly drug trafficking, across the Pacific.

3. Australia and Fiji have developed the Waqa Moana [pron: wonga moana] maritime security initiative to enhance regional operational coordination, preparedness and intelligence sharing. We are supportive of the initiative and keen to ensure KIWA is complementary to this and other initiatives.

Pacific Peace and Security Architecture and Governance

4. Forum Leaders have affirmed that an effective regional peace and security system requires fit-for-purpose architecture and a flexible and responsive security mechanism.

5. An outcome of the Pacific Police Ministers' Meeting (PPMM) in May was a proposal to institutionalise the PPMM and recognise the Joint Heads of Pacific Security (JHoPS) in the regional security architecture. This would, per the proposal, help close gaps in operational architecture to better enable Pacific-led responses to shared security challenges.

6. In addition, JHoPS members have been developing a Regional Operations Deployment Framework (RODF), a treaty-level agreement that would pre-agree arrangements for the deployment of personnel from member countries following a request for assistance. We are supportive of a proposal to begin regional negotiations on the RODF.

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Agenda item 6: People Centred Development (12:30pm)

s9(2)(f)(iv)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

New Zealand's Position

Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting

- A secure and prosperous Blue Pacific depends on investing in people. New Zealand supports a renewed focus on delivering the human development ambitions of the 2050 Strategy and the revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration. This includes translating regional commitments into practical outcomes that strengthen resilience, wellbeing and economic opportunities across the Blue Pacific.
- We support the Forum Women Leaders Meeting's call for renewed commitment to increasing women's political leadership and representation and strengthening prevention of gender-based violence. We want to strengthen these Forum-led priorities, recognising their importance to stronger institutions, more resilient communities and a more secure and prosperous region.

- We support the PacREF through all our education investments in the region and is a key contributor to its goals. We look forward to continuing discussions with partners to support the implementation of the framework and the educational aspirations of Pacific countries.

Background

Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting

1. Recent regional discussions have reinforced that strengthened women's leadership, preventing gender-based violence, and improving the ability for people with disabilities to participate meaningfully are fundamental to building resilient communities. New Zealand supports Pacific-led efforts to advance these priorities through partnerships, regional policy engagement, and implementation of the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration.

The refreshed Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

2. The refreshed Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PFRPD) is the successor to the 2016-2025 Framework and is being updated to align with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, while reflecting lessons learned and the evolving priorities of persons with disabilities across the region. New Zealand has been actively engaged throughout the refresh process and has supported a consultative approach involving governments, regional organisations, development partners and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities to ensure the updated Framework reflects regional priorities.

3. New Zealand is entering the next phase of its partnership with the Pacific Disability Forum.

Human Development

4. The Pacific faces a complex health burden from communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases (NCDs), climate-related health impacts, and significant workforce constraints. New Zealand supports Pacific partners to respond through investments in primary health care, health system strengthening, health workforce capacity, and priority health needs.

5. Education is a key component to developing prosperous, peaceful, and resilient communities. Teacher shortages, low learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy, and a growing digital divide are pressing issues in the region. New Zealand has supported the implementation of the Pacific Educational Regional Framework (PacREF) since its inception. As a policy framework PacREF continues to guide all our investments with each partner to address the most pressing education issues.

6. Early childhood development (ECD) is increasingly recognised as a foundation for lifelong learning, wellbeing and human development. Regional discussions highlighted early investment in children as an important pathway for preventing violence and supporting positive outcomes across the life course. New Zealand supports ECD regionally in partnership with UNICEF and in bilateral investments.

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Agenda item 7: Ocean and Environment (1:00pm)

s9(2)(f)(iv)

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New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand strongly supports the new Vakamanu Regional Pacific Fisheries Strategy 2026–2035 as the region's new overarching fisheries and aquaculture policy framework.
- New Zealand supports development of the new Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Ocean Statement.

Background

Fisheries Ministers Meeting

1. At the Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting in Wellington in July, Ministers endorsed the *Vakamanu Regional Pacific Fisheries Strategy 2026–2035* as the region's new overarching fisheries and aquaculture policy framework. The new strategy sets the region's aspirations for fisheries over the next 10 years and aligns with the 2050 Strategy.

- A key feature of the new strategy is that it brings together offshore fisheries, coastal fisheries and aquaculture under a single regional framework while recognising their distinct needs. Aquaculture is included more explicitly than in the previous policies, reflecting its growing importance for food security, livelihoods, climate resilience and economic development.
- New Zealand participated in development of the Vakamanu Strategy both through the Pacific Community (SPC) and Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) member consultation process and as a member of the Troika overseeing the development process.

Ocean Governance and Priorities

2. The Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner has coordinated the development of a Leaders Ocean Statement. This will set out an agreed Pacific positions that will guide Pacific engagement in global events, including UNFCC COP31, the BBNJ COP1, and the fourth United Nations Ocean Conference. Officials are aiming to finalise the Statement ahead of the Leaders meeting in Palau.

Agenda item 8: Resources and Economic Development (2:30pm)

Handling Advice

We recommend an intervention under this item.

Recommended intervention

- As we look around our region, it is clear that our most immediate challenges all have serious economic implications. We are living in a time of global uncertainty. Inflationary pressures, supply chain disruptions, infrastructure deficits, and tighter budgets are reshaping how we work.
- The **fuel crisis** is a stark reminder that our region remains vulnerable to events outside of our control.
- However, as a region we are remarkably resilient. We have always known that our strength in addressing these shared challenges comes from our unity.
- We were pleased by our Leaders' decision to invoke the Biketawa Declaration and welcome the update from the **Regional Response Mechanism.**
- This is an excellent example of **the Forum delivering on its core purpose** – to strengthen regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security.
- We have already spoken to the need to take a regional approach to security, we need to do more. But to secure our economic future, we also believe there is benefit in deepening regional economic integration.
- If we are serious about facing these problems together, we need to do more. We must give more thought to shared standards, regulatory systems, and aligning of our own national policies.
- As New Zealand prepares to join the Troika, and as we look ahead to our hosting of the **56th Pacific Islands Leader Meeting,** it is this purpose which will guide us.

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New Zealand's Position

Pacific Resilience Facility

- New Zealand has pledged NZ$20 million towards the capitalisation of the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) and has ratified the PRF treaty. However, New Zealand remains concerned about the PRF's ability to attain its funding goal of US$500 million, s9(2)(g)(i)

Fisheries development

- As a founding member and key donor alongside Australia, New Zealand strongly supports the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). The FFA plays a vital role in supporting its members to manage, protect, and develop their fisheries resources.

Forum Economic Ministers Meeting and Forum Trade Official Meeting 2026 outcomes

- New Zealand endorsed the outcome statements of both FEMM and FTOM 2026. s6(a)

Background

Pacific Resilience Facility

1. The Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) Council held its inaugural meeting on 25 June 2026 in Majuro, Republic of Marshall Islands. This event saw the total membership increase to 11 Pacific countries. While an interim CEO was appointed, the council failed to appoint an independent board and instead has agreed to a politically appointed interim board.

Fisheries

2. A significant amount of work is being done by FFA members and the Secretariat to advance the East New Britain Initiative (ENBi). ENBi is a regional platform established by Fisheries Ministers in 2023 to expand the region's participation in the global tuna value chain through regional processing and other value-add opportunities. ENBi aims to develop a regional 'hubs and spokes' model in which Pacific countries supply tuna to select hubs.

3. FFA members reaffirmed their commitment to working together to secure a favourable share of the regional albacore tuna fishery. Albacore tuna is an important fishery for the Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu, and other southern Pacific countries. FFA members will resume negotiations with distant water fishing nations later this year.

4. Coastal fisheries and aquaculture are vital to Pacific communities, supporting food security, livelihoods, employment, and economic development. To strengthen the regions response to climate challenges arising in these sectors, Ministers adopted the Pacific Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture Climate Change Strategy 2026-2036 at the recent meetings in New Zealand.

Forum Economic Ministers Meeting and Forum Trade Official Meeting 2026 outcomes

5. The Forum Trade Officials Meeting was held in Suva on 5 June 2026. The key outcome was agreement to progress the Kava Declaration to Trade Ministers, and then Forum Leaders. This is a non-binding commitment to protect the cultural identity, authenticity, and economic value of Kava as a Pacific product.

6. Trade Officials failed to reach consensus on Labour Mobility and the Pacific Private Sector Strategy Implementation plans. Officials also received an update on the Pacific Trade Invest (PTI) Beijing office. s6(a)

Since FTOM, China's Special Envoy for Pacific Island Countries Affairs, Mr Qian Bo, has confirmed US$1.08 million in funding for the PTI Beijing office, PTI Network activities, and broader Forum priorities.

7. The Forum Economic Ministers Meeting was held from 22 to 23 June 2026. The theme for this year was "Economic and Financial Inclusion in the Pacific". s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

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s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

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Agenda item 9: Climate Change and Disasters (3:00pm)

s9(2)(f)(iv)

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New Zealand's Position

Sea-Level Rise

- New Zealand has championed the positions of the Pacific Islands Forum on sea-level rise. We made significant contributions to the drafting of the two Leaders Declarations (the 2021 Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise, and the 2023 Declaration on Continuity of Statehood and the Protection of Persons in the Face of Climate Change-related Sea-Level Rise).

- We hope to see these positions reflected in the UN political declaration on sea-level rise, currently being negotiated in New York.

Pacific Climate Change Ministers Meeting

- Reinforcing Pacific leadership on climate ambition and climate resilience is a priority for New Zealand's engagement with the Forum.
- New Zealand supports agreed Pacific Partnership priorities for the Pre-COP and is actively participating in the Partnership.

6th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting

- New Zealand supports the establishment of a Renewable Energy Commissioner for the Pacific.

Background

Sea-level rise

1. New Zealand has engaged constructively in the UN declaration negotiation process, co-facilitated by Australia and Cabo Verde, including by putting forward substantive proposals, delivering national statements and joining PIF statements. New Zealand has also been working with the PIF chair to advocate and progress PIF positions throughout the informal consultations in New York.

Pacific Climate Change Ministers Meeting and Pre-COP

2. The Foreign Ministers and Leaders Meetings are important occasions for the region to coalesce and voice its climate change-related priorities, including ahead of the Pacific Pre-COP and special leaders' event in Fiji and Tuvalu from 5-8 October. Palau sees its renewable energy-focused *Leaders' Ascent Dialogue* as a preparatory event linked to the Pre-COP.

3. The Pre-COP presents an opportunity for New Zealand, with other Members, to champion Pacific climate initiatives. These include the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) and regional initiatives like the New Zealand-UK TIDES renewable energy initiative.

4. Minister Watts attended the July Pacific Climate Ministers Talanoa that noted progress of regional priority initiatives for the Pre-COP and COP31. s6(b)(ii)

5. New Zealand has pledged NZ$20 million towards the PRF and we continue to encourage partners to consider meaningful contributions towards the PRF's capitalisation.

Investing in Pacific Climate Resilience through the Pacific Community (SPC)

6. A second phase of funding for SPC's Climate Flagship programme has been approved. s9(2)(g)(i)
New Zealand's initial NZD$30 million investment leveraged more than NZD$142 million in additional climate finance to support the Pacific region's adaptation and mitigation efforts.

7. A second phase of investment scales up gains from the first phase, with a stronger focus on energy transition, facilitation of direct country access to the Flagship, providing legal support

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to countries, supporting national capacity to access climate finance from a range of sources, and building opportunities for youth engagement.

6th Pacific Regional Energy and Transports Ministers Meeting

8. PRETMM6 was held in May 2026 and saw a renewed focus on establishing the role of a Renewable Energy Commissioner for the Pacific for a Just Transition to a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific, seeking to address the technical and financial challenges of regional energy planning.
    - This proposal received endorsement from PIF Leaders in 2023, however progress on developing a Terms of Reference (ToR) was stalled by the delay of the PIF-led Review of the Regional Architecture (RRA).
    - The Pacific Community (SPC) and the PIF Secretariat have developed a draft Terms of Reference (dated 23 July) for decision by PIF Leaders at the 55th PIFLM in Palau.
    - The draft ToR outlines the purpose, guiding principles and objectives of the role however there is significant further work required by SPC and the PIF Secretariat to establish and operationalise the new approach.

9. New Zealand endorsed two regional policy documents at PRETMM6: the *Pacific One Maritime Framework* (POMF) and the *Framework for Energy Security and Resilience 2.0* (FESRIP 2.0). The POMF was developed in alignment with the PIF *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* and has been formally endorsed by PIF Leaders.

10. Palau's desire for inclusion of a goal of 100% Renewable Energy in the PRETMM6 Energy Ministers Outcome Statement was ultimately agreed by Ministers, consistent with previous PIF Leader's statements, s6(a) that this target would 'reflect differing national circumstances and transition pathways'.

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Agenda item 10: Technology and Connectivity (3:30pm)

s9(2)(f)(iv)

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New Zealand's Position

Forum Information, Communication and Technology Ministers Meeting

- New Zealand supports the development of a Regional AI Governance Framework incorporating the Pacific Digital and AI Technology Principles and a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Framework to support the implementation of the Pacific ICT Digital Transformation Action Plan 2026–2030.
- New Zealand is withholding substantive comment on a Regional Approach to Safer Digital Spaces, s9(2)(g)(i) However, we have not blocked consensus on this issue.

Regional connectivity

- Better regional connectivity is important for long-term Pacific prosperity and resilience. To this end, New Zealand has again offered to transport Pacific leaders to Palau for this year's PIF Leaders Meeting.
- New Zealand is providing $3.6m over two years to enable regional aviation agency the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO) to provide technical services, training, advice and regulatory support to nine Pacific states (Vanuatu, Nauru, Kiribati, Tonga, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Niue, Cook Islands and Tuvalu). This support helps Pacific states improve their aviation safety and security and enable economic development and tourism through better air connectivity.

Tourism

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

Background

1st Pacific Islands Forum ICT Ministers Meeting (FICTMM)

11. Minister for Defence and Minister Responsible for the GCSB and NZSIS, Hon Christopher Penk, attended the 2026 Forum ICT Ministers Meeting in Port Moresby on 23 July. While the group has met since 2023, this was the inaugural meeting since its formal integration into PIF architecture.

12. New Zealand's contributions to the Pacific's digital transformation and cyber resilience include NZ$80 million in IDC investment to develop submarine cable infrastructure, NZ$6 million to build digital capability through the regional Pacific Digital Economy Programme, and NZ$10 million to improve preparedness for cyber threats through the Cyber Security Support to the Pacific Programme. In addition, the GCSB's National Cyber Security Centre provides significant cyber capacity-building through their Pacific Partnerships Programme.

13. Key outcomes from the FICTMM, which will be considered at the PIFLM, included agreement to develop:

- A regional AI Governance Framework, incorporating the endorsed Pacific Digital and AI Technology Principles s6(a)

- A regional approach to Safer Digital Spaces; and

- A Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Framework to support implementation of the Pacific ICT Digital Transformation Action Plan 2026–2030.

4th Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting (RAMM)

14. RAMM4 was held in May 2026 and had a significant focus on the limited state acceptance of amendments to the Pacific Islands Civil Aviation Safety and Security Treaty (PICASST). This remains below the threshold required for entry into force, despite unanimous endorsements of proposed amendments at RAMM2 in 2022.

Aviation Connectivity

15. New Zealand is a significant contributor to aviation safety and security through core/programmatic support of the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO), the PIF CROP agency which provides Pacific states with technical and regulatory support and expertise. This helps Pacific states ensure safe and secure air connectivity and comply with rigorous international safety and security requirements.

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16. New Zealand has been providing airport security equipment, capacity building training and advisory services to regulators and airport authorities across the Pacific. In December 2025 New Zealand announced an investment of an additional $13.3 million, over the next five years to extend this programme, which services Niue, Tonga, Samoa, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Nauru.

17. New Zealand actively supports aviation infrastructure including building new runways (Solomon Islands, Niue) and helping maintain existing ones.

Pacific Tourism Office (SPTO) funding

18. s6(a)

s6(b)(i)

19. s6(a)

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Agenda Item 11: Update on the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings (4:30pm)

s9(2)(f)(iv)

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Background

1. Palau will host the PIF Leaders Meeting in Koror from 30 August – 4 September. This will be preceded by the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in Suva on 7 August. Palau's theme is "B.E.L.A.U – Building Economies: Life. Action. Unity." (in reference to its indigenous name, Belau). Alongside this theme, Palau has indicated a focus on economic resilience and ocean management.

2. Palau has indicated a return to orthodoxy with respect to the attendance of Dialogue and Development Partners. s6(a)

EVENT BRIEF AND BILATERALS

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Event Brief – Ministerial Retreat Breakfast on Partnerships Mechanism

Time and date: 8am, Friday, 7 August 2026

Objectives

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

Participants

- Heads of Delegation for the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting plus one.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
- Dress code: Pacific Formal (bula shirt and dress trousers)
- Accompanying official: Mark Ramsden, Divisional Manager Pacific Regional

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Speaking notes for Retreat – deliver after Chair has Spoken

- At our meeting last year, we observed an international environment under serious strain.
- That underlines the importance of the Forum's partners. In a time of economic and global uncertainty, we need to keep our partners close.
- This means we need to finalise the Forum Dialogue Partnership Mechanism in Palau. Strong partnerships support our region's security and prosperity. They also help to hold Partners to account on the things that matter to us.
- We are looking for two things from this process:
    - We must improve engagement for both Forum Members and our Partners. We need structured, high-quality engagement with all our Partners, irrespective of status.
    - The process must keep the Forum in the driving seat. It is critical Partners respect our collective priorities and procedures.
- s6(a)

- While all change presents risk, there is greater risk in doing nothing. Continued inaction risks disincentivising Partners and pushing them out.
- The spirit of hospitality runs deep in our Pacific region, as does respect. We have seen this balance work for others, including through our own experience as a partner of ASEAN. New Zealand is committed to seeing it work here too.

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Australia: Foreign Minister Penny Wong

Time and date: *7:30am, Friday 7 August, Grand Pacific Hotel*



You last engaged in the margins of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meetings in Manila last month. This is likely to be your last face-to-face meeting with Minster Wong before the election.

Key Messages

- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Fiji: Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade Sakiasi Ditoka

Time and date: *Pull aside*



Hon Sakiasi Ditoka [*ndee-tok-a*] has previously served as Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management, where he contributed to organising Fiji's humanitarian response to Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle. He has had a distinguished career in both the military and civil service, having served in international peacekeeping roles alongside holding leadership positions.

You last met Minister Ditoka on 16 July, when you signed the refreshed Duavata Partnership with Ditoka before a working lunch.

Key Messages

- Enquire into Minister Ditoka's reflections from the Future of Investment and Trade Partnership (FIT-P) Ministerial meeting he attended in Auckland. Encourage Fiji's membership of FIT-P alongside PACER Plus.
- Reiterate New Zealand's interest in exploring membership of the Ocean of Peace Alliance and welcome Minister Ditoka's views on next steps from Fiji's perspective.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Palau: Minister of State Gustav Aitaro

Time and date: *Pull aside*



Hon Gustav Aitaro [pron: *eye-tah-row*] has been Palau's Minister of State since September 2021. Aitaro was re-appointed in early 2025 following President Whipps' landslide election victory for his second term.

You last met in Palau in January this year, over a working lunch centred on Palau's upcoming hosting of PIF.

Key Messages

- Note the importance of President Whipps' visit to New Zealand in April, the first official visit by a Palauan President, reflecting the growing strength of the New Zealand–Palau partnership.
- Note New Zealand has since disbursed NZ$2.2 million as grant funding to support economic reform in Palau, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank. Reiterate our ongoing desire to support Palau in this space.
- s6(a)
- Wish Palau luck for their upcoming hosting of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, noting you will attend, along with the Prime Minister. Emphasise that New Zealand is excited about working more closely with Palau in the lead up to our own hosting – including as a fellow member of the Forum Troika from September.
- s6(a)

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Tonga: Minister for His Majesty's Diplomatic Services, HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala

Time and date: *Pull aside*



Heir to the throne **HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala** [address as: "Your Royal Highness" and subsequently "sir". A small bow on meeting would be respectful] is Minister for His Majesty's Diplomatic Services and Minister for His Majesty's Armed Forces.

You last met him in August 2025 at last year's Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in Suva, Fiji.

Key Messages

- Welcome an official visit from the Crown Prince to New Zealand this year.
- s6(a)
- Commend Tonga's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. These important commitments show Tonga's continued leadership in promoting a safer, more peaceful and nuclear-free world.

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Vanuatu: Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and External Trade Marc Ati

Time and date: *Pull aside*



Hon Marc Ati ["*ah-tee*"] entered Parliament in 2016, representing Luganville in Santo. This is Ati's third time as Minister of Foreign Affairs (2020-2022; September 2023). s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

You last met in April 2025 in Port Vila, during the Pacific Mission.

Key Messages

- Welcome signature of the Australia-Vanuatu Nakamal Agreement last month and seek Minister Ati's reflections on it.
- s6(a)

  New Zealand and Vanuatu share our own Mauri Statement of Partnership, an existing joint statement that underpins and captures the principles underlying our relationship.
- s6(a)

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BIOGRAPHIES

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Cook Islands: Secretary of Foreign Affairs Elizabeth



Elizabeth Wright-Koteka was appointed Cook Islands Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Immigration on 1 March 2026. She is attending in place of Minister Elikana due to proximity to the Cook Islands election on 12 August. Her 34-year public service career includes roles as High Commissioner to New Zealand (2021-2023), Chief of Staff to former Prime Minister Henry Puna (2012-2017), and most recently Secretary of Infrastructure.

Key Messages:

- Highlight the importance of the New Zealand-Cook Islands Defence and Security Declaration in April, and note New Zealand is already making good on our commitment to a defence and security uplift in the Cook Islands.
- s6(a)
- Underscore New Zealand's commitment to supporting the proposed US investment in Penrhyn and our hope that arrangements can be finalised soon.

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Federated States of Micronesia: Secretary of Foreign Affairs Ricky Cantero



Hon Ricky Cantero [pron: kahn-TEH-roh] was appointed Secretary (Minister equivalent) in May 2026. Previously he served as Deputy Secretary (Chief executive) from 2019 to 2026. He is a seasoned diplomat with over 20 years of service across three administrations.

You met during your visit to FSM in August 2024, where he attended your meeting with President Simina. He also attended FFMM in August 2025 in Suva as a senior official.

Key Messages

- New Zealand's enhanced engagement in Micronesia is reflected in a strengthening partnership with FSM, including increased development support, expanded scholarship opportunities, and your August 2024 visit (the first of its kind on record). FSM reinforced this momentum by appointing its first Ambassador to New Zealand, H.E. Jane Chigiyal in 2025, cross-accredited from Canberra.
- s6(a)
- Key development initiatives in FSM include NZ$4.4 million in regional support for early childhood development and safe drinking water. New Zealand also provides technical assistance through the National Oceanic Resource Management Authority to strengthen marine resource management and combat illegal fishing.
- s6(a)

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French Polynesia: Head of the Delegation for International and European Affairs, Dr Mareva Lechat-Kitalong



Dr Mareva Lechat-Kitalong ("Lur-Cha Kee-Ta-Long") is the head of the Delegation for International and European Affairs (DAIE), since 2023. The DAIE is responsible for the organisation, coordination and monitoring of relations with the European Union, the Pacific and the international community, and reports to the office of the President.

She has represented French Polynesia at the UN and in regional meetings, including as Head of Delegation for the 2025 FFMM where you would have last met her.

Key Messages

- Recall your 7-8 March visit to French Polynesia, including your meeting with President Brotherson that featured discussion on combatting transnational organised crime and responding to domestic challenges, such as energy transition, food security and economic diversification.
- s6(a)
- Ask about French Polynesia's preparations for the 2027 Pacific Games.

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Kiribati: President of the Republic of Kiribati Taneti Maamau (joining virtually)



H.E. Taneti Maamau s6(a), s9(2)(a)

You last met with President Maamau at UNGA in September 2025. President Maamau also met with Prime Minister Luxon at the PIF Leaders Meeting in September 2025.

Key Messages

- Welcome the efforts underway to implement the *Te Mauri Dialogue*, including to establish a Task Force in Kiribati and to schedule High Level Consultations.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Nauru /Naoero: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Russ Joseph Kun



Hon Russ Joseph Kun is the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Naoero Port Authority and Naoero Shipping Line. He was previously President of Naoero from September 2022 – October 2023 when he was replaced by current President, David Adeang, following a vote of no confidence.

You have not met before.

Key Messages

- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Camilla Solomon as Naoero's first High Commissioner to New Zealand in 2025, cross-accredited from Canberra. It is encouraging to see the bilateral relationship continue to deepen and grow.
- s6(a)
- Reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to supporting Naoero's long-term economic resilience. Highlight New Zealand's contribution of NZ$1 million annually (2019–2034) to the Nauru Intergenerational Trust Fund. As of June 2026, the Fund held assets of approximately AUD$479 million.

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New Caledonia: Official Representative of New Caledonia in Fiji Dr Yves Lafoy



Dr Yves Lafoy ["EEV La-FWAH"] is the Official Representative of New Caledonia to Fiji, based at the French Embassy in Suva. Dr Lafoy has extensive regional experience and previously served as Official Representative of New Caledonia in Australia (from 2019) and New Zealand (from 2012). Prior to this, he was an adviser to the Government of New Caledonia on regional cooperation. He has played a key role in New Caledonia's engagement with the PIF, contributing to its accession as a full member in 2016. He speaks fluent English.

Key Messages

- You may wish to ask Dr Lafoy for a readout of the current situation in New Caledonia following the formation of the 19th Government of New Caledonia, noting we were pleased the elections passed largely without tensions.
- s6(a)
- Note France's commitment of €2 billion to New Caledonia in reconstruction and social support. s6(a) New Zealand is seeking to cooperate further on initiatives to improve the economic livelihoods of s6(a) people, including follow up initiatives to the successful 2025 New Caledonia Study Tour to New Zealand.

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Niue: Secretary to Government, Peleni Talagi



As Secretary to Government, **Peleni** Talagi is the permanent head of the Niue Public Service and chief adviser to the Prime Minister and Cabinet. She previously held the role of Solicitor General and the Head of the Niue Financial Intelligence Unit at the Crown Law Office.

Key Messages

- Recall your recent meeting with Prime Minister Tagelagi and key issues canvassed including key NZ-funded development projects in Niue: Justice Building; and completion of the Renewable Energy project which once online will provide 80% of Niue's power.
- Note the success of recent High-Level Consultations between senior officials.
- s6(a)

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Papua New Guinea: Foreign Minister Justin Tkatchenko

Time and date: *Pull aside*



Hon Justin Tkatchenko was born in Australia to Ukrainian immigrants and became a Papua New Guinea citizen in 2006. He was a TV presenter as well as director of a landscaping company in Papua New Guinea before entering politics in 2012.

You last met at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in Manila in late July.

Key Messages

- Acknowledge that New Zealand's relationship with Papua New Guinea is in good shape, following a landmark 2025 that included bilateral visits by each side's Leaders. Our relationship is grounded in long-standing government-to-government cooperation; practical defence cooperation; and our significant development partnership.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- Note New Zealand has made travel more accessible for Pacific partners, including under the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme. This includes a 12-month trial of reduced visa fee and 12-month trial of NZETA for Australian visa holders travelling from Australia. The numbers of PNG RSE workers in New Zealand continue to grow (reaching a record high of 662 in the 2025/2026 season).

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Republic of the Marshall Islands: Foreign Minister Kalani Kaneko



Hon Kalani Kaneko [pron: kah-NEH-ko] has served in the role since January 2024. A member of the Nitijela (Parliament) representing Majuro Atoll, he previously served as Minister of Health and has been a strong advocate for education, healthcare, and the interests of Marshallese veterans.

You met during your visit to RMI in August 2024.

Key Messages

- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Junior Aini as the Republic of the Marshall Islands' first Ambassador to New Zealand in April 2025, cross-accredited from Suva. It is encouraging to see the bilateral relationship continue to deepen and grow
- s6(a)
- Highlight New Zealand's support to on climate-induced loss and damage, and through technical assistance to the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA) to strengthen resource management and combat illegal fishing. Emphasise New Zealand's commitment to continuing support in these areas.

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Samoa: Chief Executive of Samoa Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peseta Noumea Simi



Peseta (*pesseh-tah*) Noumea Simi has worked in Samoa's Public Service for 43 years and in her current role since 2015.

Peseta's career has been focused mainly on international relations, aid coordination, and effective development cooperation, working in the PM's Office, Ministry of Finance and Samoa's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (SMFAT). She is a very senior figure within the Samoa system, s6(a)

Key Messages

- Ask after La'aulialemalietoa's visit to New Zealand from 17-24 July alongside Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour Fata Ryan Schuster, in which he engaged with RSE workers and industry partners.
- Reiterate invitation for a full formal visit in the future.
- s6(a)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

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Solomon Islands: Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Rick Houenipwela



Hon Rick Houenipwela *(Ho-en-ip-weller)*, commonly known as Rick Hou *(Ho)*, was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade in May 2026. A former Prime Minister (2017-19), he entered politics in 2010 following a distinguished career with the Central Bank of Solomon Islands which included serving as Governor, s6(a) He visited New Zealand as Prime Minister in 2018.

You last met with Hou when he accompanied Prime Minister Wale to New Zealand in early June.

Key Messages

- Reiterate our thanks for the rescue of the two NZ hikers in Guadulcanal that we included in our letter of 4 August.
- s6(a)
- Express interest in Prime Minister Wale's proposal for a Forum regional security treaty, s6(a)
- Share that, s6(b)(i) New Zealand is now offering additional support for Solomon Islands' participation in the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme. This includes up to NZD 600,000 in grant funding to the Solomon Islands Labour Mobility Unit.

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Tuvalu: Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Labour and Trade Pasuna Tuaga



Mr Pasuna Tuaga is the Permanent Secretary of the Tuvalu Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Labour and Trade. He has represented Tuvalu at major international forums, including the United Nations General Assembly and regional policy conferences, where he has advocated on issues such as climate change, migration, economic resilience, and Pacific regional cooperation.

Key Messages

- Affirm New Zealand's on-going commitment to the relationship with Tuvalu, noting our significant efforts to address key development priorities set out by the Government of Tuvalu. New Zealand is pleased to bolster economic resilience in Tuvalu through reform-linked budget support, contributions to the Tuvalu Trust Fund and comprehensive support to Tuvalu's Fisheries Department (the cornerstone of its economy).
- Welcome the Guest of Government visit to New Zealand by Prime Minister Feleti Teo, Minister Paulson and Minister Kofe in March 2026, including the signing of the renewed Statement of Partnership.
- s6(a)

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Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat: Secretary General Baron Waqa



Baron Waqa [WONG-gah] became Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in June 2024. A former President of Nauru (2013-2019), he brings deep political experience to the role. As Secretary General, he leads the Forum Secretariat and serves as Permanent Chair of the CROP agencies.

You last met Mr. Waqa during a layover in Fiji in January 2026.

Key Messages

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

- Comment New Zealand looks forward to working more closely with the Secretary General when we step onto the Troika in September, and as host of the 56th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting.
- Note New Zealand's hosting will be guided by the Forum's central purpose - strengthening regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security.
- Ask the Secretary General about the Secretariat's plans for presenting a Hosting Agreement for New Zealand's consideration.

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NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

VISIT TO THE PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

30 August – 4 September 2026

NON-PACIFIC ATTENDEES

BRIEFING MATERIAL

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Brazil: Gilberto De Moura, Ambassador to the Philippines

HE Ambassador Gilberto De Moura, is Brazil's Ambassador to the Philippines. A career diplomat since 1974, he has previously been ambassador to Thailand and Slovenia, Consul-General to Shanghai, alongside postings to Syria, Germany, Poland and France. Other positions have included Director of the Asia and Oceania department as well as the BRIC's deputy sherpa.

- Enquire as to Brazil's engagement with the PIF. s6(a)

- Enquire as to Brazil's ongoing strategic engagement in the Pacific. Seek insights on its priorities s6(a)

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Canada: Hon Randeep Sarai, Secretary of State for International Development

Hon Randeep Sarai [*suh-rye*] has served as Canada's Secretary of State for International Development since 2025. He practised law prior to his election to Parliament in 2015 and has previously served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence. Sarai's riding of Surrey Centre in British Colombia is home to the largest Indo-Fijian diaspora in Canada. He travelled to Fiji in early January to officially open Canada's new High Commission s9(2)(g)(i)

- s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

- Seek an update on Canada's international development priorities, especially in the Indo-Pacific. Acknowledge its CA$7.5m (NZ$9.1m) contribution to the Pacific Resilience Facility.
- s6(a)

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China: Qian Bo, Special Envoy of the Chinese Government for Pacific Island Countries Affairs

Qian Bo [Chee-an Boar] was appointed Special Envoy in February 2023. He has previously been Ambassador in Fiji, and Consul-General in Istanbul and has had postings in Brussels, Geneva, and New York and India.
s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

- s6(a)

- Note that we value the opportunity to discuss Pacific issues with China. It's always useful to discuss Pacific priorities, including those outlined in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.



Commonwealth: Deputy Secretary-General Tanmaya Lal

Ambassador Tanmaya Lal *[TAN-mah-yah LAHL]* is the Commonwealth's Deputy Secretary-General (Programmes), responsible for providing strategic leadership across the organisation's core programmes and overseeing the implementation of the Commonwealth Strategic Plan. A career diplomat with nearly 35 years of experience, he previously served as Secretary (West) in India's Ministry of External Affairs and held senior diplomatic postings including Ambassador to Sweden and Latvia, High Commissioner to Mauritius, and Ambassador/Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York. His expertise spans multilateral diplomacy, sustainable development, climate change, international development partnerships, trade and investment, and global policy negotiations. He holds qualifications in Chemical Engineering and Biological Sciences.

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Cuba: Néstor Enrique Torres Olivera, Ambassador to Fiji

Néstor Enrique Torres Olivera *[NEHS-tor en-REE-keh TOH-rres]* has served as Cuba's Ambassador to Fiji since February 2026. His Embassy is responsible for relations with 11 other Pacific Island states.
s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Before his appointment, Torres worked in Cuba's Directorate General of Protocol where he held the position of Principal Specialist. You should refer to him as Your Excellency.

- Acknowledge the worsening humanitarian situation in Cuba and highlight New Zealand's NZD 50k contribution to the World Food Programme in July to support food shortages.
- Seek Cuba's objectives for its PIF engagement as a Dialogue Partner.



EU: Maria Castillo Fernández, Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific

María Castillo Fernández has served as EU Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific since September 2025. Her previous roles include EU Ambassador to South Korea (2020-2025) and Malaysia (2016-2020) and EU Head of Office in Hong Kong (2008-2012).

- Affirm the importance New Zealand places on the EU's continued engagement in the Pacific

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India: Pabitra Margherita, Minister of State for External Affairs

Shri Pabitra Margherita *[puh-BEE-truh mar-guh-REE-tuh]* assumed the role of Indian Minister of State for External Affairs in June 2024. He also holds the post of Minister of State for Textiles and has been a member of the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Parliament) since April 2022. Minister of State Margherita travelled to New Zealand in May 2025, where he met with you, the Prime Minister and Minister McClay.

- Welcome the recent upgrade in bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership.
- Encourage India's continued engagement in the Pacific through the Pacific Islands Forum and other established regional architecture.



Israel: Maya Yaron, Ambassador to Fiji and the Pacific

Maya Yaron *[Yaa-ron]* began her role in the recently re-opened Fiji Embassy in June 2026, accredited to nine other Pacific countries. Yaron has served in Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs for two-decades across a range of geographic regions. Prior to this role, Yaron was Israel's Representative in Taiwan.

s6(a)

- Congratulate the Ambassador on her new role and enquire about her priorities for the coming years.
- Encourage Israel to engage through the PIF and regional architecture.

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Philippines: Leo Herrera-Lim, Department of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary for Policy

Leo M. Herrera-Lim [pron. Her-reh-rah Lim] is the Undersecretary for Policy in the Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs and the Philippines ASEAN Senior Official. He has over 35 years' experience as a career diplomat, including Ambassador to Denmark (2019-2025), with prior postings in London, Washington DC, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Herrera-Lim was previously Chair and the Philippine Representative to the ASEAN Commission on Human Rights. He has a professional interest in economics and holds a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of the Philippines.

Herrera-Lim last travelled to New Zealand (Christchurch) in May for the ASEAN-New Zealand Dialogue hosted by MFAT. s9(2)(a)

- s6(a)

- Commend the Philippines on its leadership of ASEAN this year.
- Acknowledge our strengthening partnership as New Zealand and the Philippines mark 60 years of bilateral relations.
- Emphasise our eagerness to maintain momentum and translate our new Comprehensive Partnership into practical cooperation that delivers positive results for both our countries.
- Welcome Philippine interest in CPTPP. We look forward to continuing preparatory discussions.

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Republic of Korea: KWON Young-Seup, Ambassador to Fiji

Ambassador Kwon Young-seup *[pron. kwon-young-sup]* has served as the Republic of Korea's Ambassador to Fiji since June 2026. Ambassador Kwon previously served as Director-General of the Foreign and National Security Policy Bureau in Korea's Prime Minister's Office. His earlier overseas postings include Consul-General in Chennai, India; Minister at the Korean Embassy in Brazil; Minister-Counsellor in Thailand; and Counsellor in Finland. He has also held senior roles in Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs covering trade policy and free trade agreement implementation.

- Welcome Korea's contribution to the **SPC Research Vessel**, alongside New Zealand's, and its planned contribution to the **Pacific Resilience Fund**.
- Note concerns about the effects of the **fuel crisis** in the Pacific. s6(a)

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Singapore: Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Dr Vivian Balakrishnan has been Singapore's Foreign Minister since 2015, and a Member of Parliament since 2001. s6(a)

s9(2)(g)(i)

Minister Balakrishnan last attended PIF in 2023 as part of Singapore's first engagement with the Forum as a Dialogue Partner.

Dr Balakrishnan previously had a career as an ophthalmologist, including as CEO of Singapore General Hospital.

- Welcome Singapore's continued engagement in the Pacific. In the context of increasing geopolitical competition in the Indo-Pacific, s6(a)

- Emphasise New Zealand's desire to work more closely with Singapore on Pacific issues s6(a)

- Note the Forum is a good opportunity to identify further areas for ASEAN-PIF cooperation during our respective chair years in 2027.

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Spain: Luis Planas, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Luis Planas *[pronunciation: loo-ees* plah-*nass]* has served as Spanish Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food since 2018. He was previously a Minister in the Andalusian Regional Government and Spanish Ambassador to Morocco and the European Union.

Planas is currently campaigning to become the next Director General of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), competing with candidates from Ireland and Italy, as well as Morocco, Türkiye and Angola. While the EU has agreed to unite behind a single European candidate, no consensus has yet emerged. New Zealand will decide on which candidature to support in s9(2)(j)

- Welcome continued Spain and EU engagement in the Pacific.
- s9(2)(g)(i)



Türkiye: Melih Karalar, Ambassador to New Zealand

HE Melih Karalar (MEH-leeh kah-rah-LAHR) was appointed as **Türkiye's Ambassador to New Zealand** in July 2025, his first Head of Mission posting. Karalar is also accredited to the Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu. Karalar was First Secretary, then Counsellor, at the Turkish Embassy in New Zealand from 2010-2014. Karalar has held postings in Addis Ababa, Manila, Munich, and Sydney.

- Enquire about Türkiye's representation to the upcoming Pacific Pre-COP and Leaders' event being held in Fiji and Tuvalu.
- Ask about Türkiye's priorities as it deepens its engagement in the Pacific region.

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Norway: Milla Skaug Odegaard, Special Political Envoy for the Foreign Minister

Milla Skaug Odegaard, Special Political Envoy for the Foreign Minister *[pron: MEE-lah SKOWG UR-deh-gore]*

Milla Skaug Ødegaard is a Norwegian Labour Party politician and Political Adviser to Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs. Born in 1999, she has a background in law, local government, and Norway's UN delegation in New York. She has worked on international issues including climate diplomacy, Ukraine, and peace-building efforts in the Middle East.

- Reinforce the value New Zealand attaches to our relationship with Norway and our shared commitment to the international rules-based system. Note your visit to Norway in October 2025, and your recent meeting with the Norwegian Foreign Affairs Minister Eide at the ASEAN FMM.
- Reflect on Pacific regional challenges. Welcome Norway's increasing efforts and engagements in the Pacific, including its planned announcement of support for the Pacific Resilience Facility at this year's PIFLM.

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DS PDG Pull-Aside: Green Climate Fund Executive Director



Mafalda Duarte took up the role of Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund in August 2023. She has overseen an ambitious programme of operational and organisational reform.

Originally from Portugal, Ms Duarte is a climate finance specialist. She was CEO of the Climate Investment Funds and held senior positions at the African Development Bank and World Bank.

Ms. Duarte hosted a dinner in the margins of the Korea – Pacific Islands Foreign Ministers Meeting in December 2025, where New Zealand was represented by Hon. Casey Costello. She last attended the PIF Leaders Meeting in Tonga in 2024.

Key Messages

- Welcome efforts by the GCF to improve access to finance for Pacific SIDS. s9(2)(g)(i)
- s6(b)(i)
- Welcome the establishment of a GCF sub-regional office in Fiji.

Background

Under Duarte's leadership there has been significant progress on the challenges that Pacific countries face accessing GCF resources, s9(2)(g)(i)

The ADB-led Regional Programmatic Approach to Climate Action (RPACA) is seeking to overcome these barriers through a single regional GCF proposal s9(2)(g)(i)

s6(b)(i)

Earlier this year, the Board agreed to establish a network of **GCF sub-regional offices**, including one in Fiji. Timelines to establish this office are still being worked through.

New Zealand is part of a GCF constituency with Spain and Ireland. Our longstanding representative at the GCF Board, Ali Carlin, has recently handed over the role to Will Chisholm.

[1] The project budget has increased from $US240m in 2019 to $US334m because of project delays.

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Meeting Brief: World Bank Vice President Carlos Felipe Jaramillo



Carlos Felipe Jaramillo is the World Bank Vice President for the East Asia and Pacific (EAP) Region, based in Singapore, overseeing partnerships with 23 countries and managing an active portfolio exceeding USD32 billion. EAP's operations focus on sustainable energy transition, strengthening human capital through health and education programs, and enhancing resilience and digitalisation.

Mr. Jaramillo brings over two decades of leadership across multiple regions and global practices. Most recently serving as Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean since 2020.

Other attendees: Tatiana Proskuryakova (IBRD/IDA Division Director for the Pacific Islands except for Vanuatu and Solomon Islands); Han Fraeters (IBRD/IDA Division Director for PNG, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands); Keiko Miwa (IFC (Private Sector) Director for East Asia Pacific).

Objectives

- Acknowledge the strong collaboration between New Zealand and the World Bank in supporting Pacific Island countries through the fuel crisis.
- Discuss how the fuel crisis has highlighted the critical importance of energy security across the region and how we can collaborate to turn our crisis response collaboration into an energy transition-focused one.
- Register New Zealand's strong interest in continuing a collaborative Quads (ADB/Australia/New Zealand/World Bank) approach with a focus on increased energy and economic resilience in the region.
- s6(b)(i)

Talking Points

Fuel Crisis and Renewable Energy Transition

- Welcome the World Bank's efforts to provide immediate relief to Pacific Island countries as they navigate the Middle East fuel crisis.
- Welcome how the Quads grouping (ADB/Australia/New Zealand/World Bank) has been used recently to more closely coordinate financial and technical support to the Pacific region. As the four largest providers of development finance in the Pacific, it is great to see the Quads aligning thinking and working more closely together.
- Note New Zealand remains committed to supporting Pacific Island countries, especially as countries seek to reduce their exposure to volatile fuel prices and reliance on imported fuels. We appreciate that these decisions come with difficult trade-offs for these economies and require careful navigation and support.
- Emphasise our intention to continue working together to help accelerate the uptake of renewable energy across the region, and to strengthen the policy toolkit for social protection measures during crisis events.

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- Note that we will be guided by the priorities set by Pacific Leaders at PIFLM, pre-COP, and COP31, and that we look forward to working with Pacific governments and the World Bank to build a more economic and energy resilient region.

Solomon Islands Bina Harbour Project (Malaita Province)

- Welcome the World Bank/IFC's engagement with the Bina Harbour Project, particularly given its scale and complexity. Note the significant progress made on project preparation, and the value of IFC's transaction advisory support.
- Note the Solomon Islands Government's (SIG) strong commitment to the project and the significant benefits the project could deliver. Bina is SIG's highest infrastructure development priority and is expected to create around 1,600 direct jobs and help Solomon Islands retain more value from its tuna resources.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

International Finance Corporation (IFC)

- Note New Zealand's interest in promoting better coordination on private sector access to finance and investment in the Pacific, with IFC, ADB and MFAT all active in this area.
- Highlight the role of the private sector in supporting Pacific economies transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy. IFC's support for MSME financing through its Sustainable Loan Guarantee Program looks to be a valuable approach that we could build on together.
- (If raised) Acknowledge receipt of IFC's concept note on "Pacific Resilience Initiative 2.0" and note that we need time to digest this. Indicate our initial thinking that there may be more value in exploring a partnership focused on SME finance and investment, including on renewable energy.

Correspondent Banking Relationships

- Note the World Bank's leadership on the 'Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships (CBRs) Project' which aims to address the decline of Pacific CBRs, a priority for the region. Progress on the project is now tracking well.

Background

1. The World Bank Group has increased its support for Pacific Island countries in recent years. Since the start of the IDA21 cycle on 1 July 2025, it has committed USD600 million in financing to the Pacific Island governments (including PNG), which is on track to exceed the USD1.4 billion in commitments in (the three year) IDA20 cycle and the pandemic level of USD1.5 billion in IDA19. Alongside increased sovereign

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financing, the Bank has put in place a small states strategy, which seeks to better tailor its approach to Pacific contexts and also increased private sector finance through IFC.

Fuel Crisis Impact, Response, and Renewable Energy Transition

2. As Pacific Island countries rely heavily on imported fuel to meet their energy needs, international fuel price increases have translated into higher import costs, placing additional pressure on government budgets, utilities, businesses, and households. As at July 2026, we estimate that around USD935 million has been spent by Pacific Island countries in additional fuel costs since February 2026.

3. Scenario analysis suggests that Pacific Island countries could face total additional fuel costs of between USD1 billion and USD2.7 billion by the end of the year, depending on how global oil prices evolve. If prices remain elevated at levels seen at the end of July 2026, the additional fuel bill could reach around USD1.8 billion.

4. Exactly how the larger fuel bill is absorbed between governments, importers, state owned enterprises, the private sector, and households differs across countries. ADB and the World Bank project a growth slowdown of between 0.5% and 0.9% in 2026 compared to 2025 for the 11 largest Pacific Island countries[1] excluding Papua New Guinea. For countries with monthly inflation data (Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Tonga), ADB and the World Bank estimate that inflation in June-July 2026 has doubled relative to pre-crisis levels.

5. The ADB, Australia, New Zealand, and the World Bank are providing around USD300 million in support to countries in the region. While this is significant, it is well below the impact of increased fuel import bill alone (which does not consider other imports (e.g., food) or second order impacts). It also comes at the expense of other development priorities as MDBs have used portfolio reallocations which mean other planned projects need to be deferred.

6. s6(a)

Fiscal sustainability depends on well targeted measures that reach those most in need.

7. Volatile fuel prices in import dependent Pacific Island countries undermines economic security as well as development gains. MFAT-funded analysis showed that improving energy efficiency and reducing demand for fossil fuels is the only long-term option for reducing exposure to the volatility of supply and price shocks.

8. MFAT officials have been looking to broaden the policy discussions in the Quads forum beyond the recent focus on procurement reform and into ways where the region's top four donors can work together to support real transformative change. The fuel crisis has provided a timely opportunity to coalesce efforts around this issue, and to highlight the overlapping interests among these four partners. s6(a)

[1] Countries included by ADB and World Bank in this group are: Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Naoero, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

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9. To enable the energy transition, support to Pacific Island countries needs to go beyond infrastructure delivery to a broader ecosystem approach. This should include regulatory reform, state-owned enterprise reform, long term operation and maintenance, energy efficiency standards, building capability, and regional coordination to maximise technical and funding opportunities. Commitments to invest in addional renewable energy supply, particularly by the private sector, alongside the current fuel crisis can also play a role in overcoming political economy barriers to reform.

10. The establishment of the Pacific Regional Renewable Energy Commissioner will support regional leadership, coordination, and facilitation for the transition, although most of the delivery will be country-led. s6(a)

Bina Harbour Tuna Processing Plant

11. It is a longstanding Solomon Islands Government (SIG) priority to establish a tuna processing operation in Bina Harbour, Malaita. The proposed model is a public-private partnership: a private investor would finance, build and operate the tuna processing plant, while SIG and development partners would finance the core port, power, water and other infrastructure needed to make the site investable.

12. New Zealand has supported the project since 2015 s6(a) Foundational environmental and social studies, technical studies, a concept design and detailed cost and risk analysis for the enabling infrastructure have been completed. SIG has also progressed discussions with Pacific partners on potential tuna supply arrangements. IFC is supporting SIG to prepare the process to select a private investor to finance, build and operate the plant.

13. The project is expected to deliver significant economic and social benefits. The plant could create around 1,600 jobs, alongside business and employment opportunities, and allow Solomon Islands to retain more value from tuna currently processed offshore.

14. s6(a)

15. s6(b)(i)

16. New Zealand currently has more than NZ$25 million committed across support for the Bina Harbour Project Office, resource-owner engagement and IFC transaction advisory services. Current funding arrangements largely run to the end of 2027, while our existing mandate for project-management support extends to 2030. New Zealand is not in a position to provide a lead share of construction financing. New Zealand welcomes greater involvement from like-minded partners.

International Financial Corporation (IFC)

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17. MFAT is currently funding the Pacific Resilience Initiative (PRI) implemented by IFC. It focuses on two areas: (1) preparatory TA for large scale infrastructure projects (including Bina Harbour, on grid solar, water), as well as support to Pacific financial institutions to increase lending to SMEs at affordable rates.

18. Through PRI, IFC is providing technical advisory support to the Government of Solomon Islands on the Bina Harbour Project. Our Honiara post has been a strong supporter of this work, which complements our own bilateral support for the project. We also see the value of the work PRI has been doing to improve SMEs' access to affordable finance through building the capacity of Pacific financial institutions.

19. s6(a)

20. s6(a)

21. This month, IFC submitted a concept note for a "PRI 2.0". While DEVECO is still assessing the proposal, it appears to be a continuation of the two areas in the current programme plus a third pillar called "Business Environment and Market Creation."

22. s6(a)

New Zealand's Engagement with the World Bank

23. Recently, New Zealand's focus with the World Bank has been to advocate for procurement reforms to increase market competition and project quality in the region, s6(b)(ii) and to ensure that Bank operations appropriately recognise and respond to the unique circumstances of Pacific Small Island States. The World Bank has responded to this advocacy s6(b)(ii)

24. With these shifts underway, and the Quads forum working effectively as a knowledge sharing and coordinating mechanism, MFAT officials are now looking to shift our engagement priorities to issues where collaborative effort can make a real impact within increasingly constrained fiscal and geopolitical contexts.

25. New Zealand works closely with ADB, Australia, the European Union, and the World Bank to deliver reform-linked budget support in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Tuvalu. The World Bank provides responsive technical assistance and diagnostics to support important reform and – in many cases – acts as the lead donor in these programmes. s6(b)(ii)

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26. Beyond MFAT, Bioeconomy Science Institute (BSI) and Te Waihanga Infrastructure Commission (TW) have increased their engagement with the World Bank. For BSI, this has been through providing technical support for agriculture research institutes in Bank projects. TW's engagement is limited to knowledge sharing.

27. Recent New Zealand government engagements include Hon Nicola Willis meeting with President Ajay Banga, VP Gallina Vincelette with Todd McClay and yourself, and a visit from Lisandro Martin in August. s6(b)(ii)

28. At the World Bank Group's resident Board of Directors, New Zealand is in a constituency with Australia, Korea, Mongolia, Cambodia, PNG and nine Pacific Island countries (all except Tonga and Fiji). The current executive director is from Australia.

Correspondent Banking Relationships

29. Pacific Island countries have experienced a severe withdrawal of correspondent banking relationships (CBRs) – around a 60 percent decline since 2011, double the global average. CBRs involve the provision of payment banking services by one bank to another where both institutions are based in different countries.

30. This decline threatens the functioning of remittances, trade, aid flows, and disaster-response finance, risking financial isolation for several countries. The drivers include high compliance costs, low profitability, and heightened anti-money laundering and countering financing of terrorism risk perceptions among global banks. Pacific island countries' small markets, low transaction volumes, and uneven regulatory frameworks further undermine the commercial viability of maintaining CBRs.

31. Through the International Development Cooperation programme, New Zealand provided a USD2 million contribution to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the World Bank's 'Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships Project'. This activity aims to address the decline of Pacific CBRs.

Development Economy and Prosperity Division (DEVECO)
August 2026

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Kenna

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
RT HON WINSTON PETERS

NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM LEADERS MEETING

30 August – 1 September



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France: Minister Delegate for Francophonie, International Partnerships and French Nationals Abroad Éléonore Caroit 58

Singapore: Minister of Foreign Affairs Vivian Balakrishnan 59

United States: Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau 60

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Germany: Parliamentary State Secretary of the Environment Ministry Bettina Hagedorn 62

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Australia: Prime Minister Anthony Albanese 64

Fiji: Prime Minister, Sitiveni Rabuka 65

French Polynesia: President Moetai Brotherson 66

New Caledonia: Member of Government for Mines and Energy, Alcide Ponga 67

Niue: Prime Minister Dalton Tagelagi 68

Solomon Islands: Prime Minister Matthew Wale 69

Tonga: Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua 70

Vanuatu: Minister of Climate Change Hon Ralph Regenvanu 71

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat: Secretary-General Baron Waqa 72

Tokelau [Associate Member]: Ulu Alapati Tavite 73

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Overview and Objectives

Date: 29 August – 1 September 2026

Attendees: As Forum Chair, Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr. will host most events throughout the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Week. Most Pacific Leaders are confirmed to be attending.

Attire: Pacific Formal (bula shirt provided).

Key objectives: We suggest three key objectives across the week to build on progress made at the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting:

- **Demonstrating New Zealand's deep commitment to Pacific regionalism in the lead-up to New Zealand's hosting of the Forum.** The Forum is one of New Zealand's most important commitments and a cornerstone of our engagement in the Pacific. As policy planning begins for our hosting, it is important to s6(a) and investing in our hosting responsibilities and Troika membership.
- **Encouraging greater partner investment in the region.** As Leaders finalise the Forum's Partnerships Mechanism, we need to encourage increased Partner engagement and investment in the region. s6(a)
- **Promoting greater regional connectivity and integration.** New Zealand's hosting of the 56th Forum will be guided by the Forum's central purpose – strengthening regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security. NZDF's "milk-run" is a tangible demonstration of New Zealand's commitment to regional connectivity. s6(a)

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Pacific Resilience Facility Pledges

Country	Pledged Currency	US$ (approx.)
Australia	AUD100 m	69,353,277
Canada	CAD7.5 m	5,485,192 (paid in)
China	USD0.5 m	500,000
France	EUR2 m	2,278,922
Germany	EUR5 m	5,697,304
Ireland	EUR3 m	3,418,519 (paid in)
Japan	JPY417 m	2,731,525 (paid in)
Marshall Islands	USD1 m	1,000,000
Naoero (Nauru)	AUD1 m	693,533 (partially paid in)
Netherlands	EUR1 m	1,139,483
New Zealand	NZD20 m	11,522,382
Saudia Arabia[1]	USD50 m	50,000,000
Solomon Islands	USD1 m	1,000,000
Taiwan	USD3 m	3,000,000
United States	USD20 m	20,000,000
Total		**177,820,137**
Target Capitalisation		500,000,000
Remaining		322,179,863

Country	Pledged Currency	US$ (approx.)
Australia	AUD100 m	69,353,277

s6(b)(ii)

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Other Contributions

- Austria (€1 million) and Portugal's (€1 million) contributions to the PRF are being used for on-granting for early demonstration projects, not a contribution to the PRF capital base.

Expected Pledges

- The United Kingdom is expected to announce a £9-10m contribution at the 2026 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting. We understand the first tranche will be used for early

demonstration projects, not a contribution to the capitalisation, which requires more due diligence particularly related to PRF governance.

- Italy is seeking final approvals for a €500,000 contribution to the Pacific Resilience Facility to announce before the Forum.
- Norway's response to the PIF Partnership Mechanism survey shows Norway intends to announce a contribution of NOK 10 million (approximately NZ$1.8 million) to the PRF. Norway's foreign ministry have advised that their agency for development cooperation (Norad) is in contact with the PRF Secretariat and are hopeful to announce this contribution at PIFLM 55.
- s6(b)(i)

Active Requests

- s6(b)(i)
- s6(b)(i)
- s6(b)(i)

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EVENT BRIEFS

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Ocean Partnership Roundtable

Time and date: 2:00-6:00pm, Sunday, 30 August

Objectives

- To demonstrate New Zealand's interest in a priority matter for President Whipps.

Guests

- All meeting delegates, Special Guests and Invited Guests s6(a)

Agenda

- 2.00pm: Opening remarks and perspectives from Pacific Leaders and strategic partners
- 3.00pm Roundtable 1: Pacific-Led Priorities and Implementation Opportunities (speaking notes provided below).

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10 minutes' drive from the Palau Pacific Resort hotel)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Media

- New Zealand and local media will be present.

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Speaking notes

Roundtable One: Pacific-Led Priorities and Implementation Opportunities (3.00pm - 4.15pm)

- Thank you chair and delegates we're pleased to speak briefly on behalf of New Zealand in this discussion on mobilising finance and partnerships in the Pacific.
- The Pacific's ocean is one of our region's greatest assets. Realising its potential and protecting its values will require sustained investment and strong partnerships.
- In the Pacific, success will depend on attracting and retaining responsible and responsive investment. We need to build serious partnerships to ensure Pacific countries can realise the benefits of their ocean resources.
- New Zealand is a partner in a range of regional initiatives that aim to provide flexible an accessible finance to help build ocean and climate resilience in the region. We encourage our partners to invest in these Pacific-led solutions, which include the Pacific Resilience Facility, efforts led by our CROP partners, including the important work of the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, and SPC's Flagship programmes on ocean and climate.
- New Zealand is also a proud partner, and Executive Board member of the Global Fund for Coral Reefs. This initiative is providing access to finance for sustainable businesses and helping build the resilience of the region's critical coral reefs. We also encourage others to join us and support these efforts.

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Ocean Reception hosted by H.E. Whipps Jr.

Time and date: 6:00pm, Sunday, 30 August

Runsheet

- 6:30pm: Arrival of Leaders
- 6:40pm Welcome and Prayer
- 6:50pm Opening Remarks by Secretary General
- 7:00pm Remarks by Minister Peters
- 7:10pm Remarks by Bezos Earth Fund representative
- 7:20pm Closing remarks by Palau President Whipps

Objectives

- To interact with Forum Leaders and show support for President Whipps as host and Forum Chair.
- To highlight New Zealand's leading role in creating successful Pacific Ocean climate initiatives and partnerships.

Guests

- All meeting delegates, Special Guests and Invited Guests s6(a)

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Palau Pacific Resort
- Dress code: Pacific Formal
- You have been asked to give short remarks at the start of the event, alongside President Whipps, Prime Minister Rabuka, Forum Secretary General Waqa and a representative of the Bezos Earth Fund (which has made a significant commitment to the Niue Ocean Wide Partnership).

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Speaking notes

- President Whipps, Heads of Government, Honourable Ministers, Secretary General, Pacific Ocean Commissioner, representatives from across the Pacific, and distinguished guests.
- It is a pleasure to join you this evening to celebrate Pacific Ocean leadership, and discuss what's possible for our region, the vast Blue Pacific Continent we call home.
- We are proud to support the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner and its leadership in bringing Pacific countries together. Commissioner, we value the serious contribution you and your office make to this important work.

Backing Pacific Priorities

- The importance New Zealand places on our region is no secret.
- In our travels to all Pacific Islands Forum countries over the last three years, one message has come through time and time again: the importance of the ocean as a crucial part in our economies and a cornerstone of our livelihoods.
- New Zealand is committed to working alongside you to strengthen climate and ocean resilience, support sustainable livelihoods and ensure the Pacific realises the benefits from our ocean.
- New Zealand has strongly supported the Pacific Resilience Facility through a $20 million pledge. We are vigorously knocking on doors and seeking Pacific Resilience Facility pledges across the globe from other regions, particularly in Europe, Middle East and North America. As the saying goes – 'if you don't ask, you'll never know,' and we'll continue with these efforts to reach the fund's US$500 million target.

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- Once fully capitalised, the PRF will provide accessible grants to help our region build climate and disaster resilience at the community level. We need more contributions from our Partners to ensure it can deliver for the Pacific.
- Outside of formal mechanisms like the PRF, New Zealand is focussed on supporting greater public and private sector investment into the Pacific. Our Blue Pacific Ocean is at the heart of all economic activity in our countries – just like it was when our ancestors departed the shores of Asia many hundreds of years ago. This is why New Zealand strongly support investment in port facilities and maritime trade and we look forward to discussing these important issues this week.
- We strongly believe that our Ocean's fisheries is a bounty that can be managed in a sustainable way to ensure the prosperity of future generations. This is why we have invested in SPC's 'Climate Science for Ensuring Pacific Tuna Access' Program. Tuna remains one of the Pacific's most valuable economic resources, yet science shows stocks are shifting in search of cooler waters.
- SPC's programme is helping us better understand these changes, and to strengthen our economic and climate resilience. It is also a good example of how a strategic investment can attract further support. By bringing in other Partners we have helped this important work to expand across the region.
- We are supporting marine spatial planning efforts across the region, working with countries to balance economic opportunity, climate resilience and the sustainable management of marine resources.

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- Through this work, we were pleased to support Palau to develop its first Sustainable Ocean Policy, launched earlier this month. It is an important milestone for Palau and demonstrates Pacific leadership delivering solutions that work for its people and the resources they depend on.

Conclusion

- In the Pacific, success will depend on attracting and retaining responsible and responsive investment.
- In 2027, New Zealand will have the privilege of hosting the Pacific Islands Forum. Our discussions today, on the future of our ocean, will help shape our preparations for that role.
- We will continue working closely with you as we prepare for that responsibility so that when New Zealand takes the chair, we will do so with a clear understanding of the Pacific's priorities, interests, and ambitions.
- Thank you.

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Polynesian Leaders Group (PLG) Lunch Meeting

Time and date: 12.45-1.50pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- To understand the priorities of Polynesian Leaders and discuss key issues in advance of the wider suite of Forum meetings later in the week.
- To seek the views of Polynesian Leaders on priority areas of focus for New Zealand's hosting and chairing of the Forum from next year.

Participants

- Forum Leaders from Polynesian countries, including the Ulu of Tokelau. New Zealand is an "observer" in the Group; the proposed Group Charter will define this more formally.
- You will be accompanied by Bernadette Cavanagh (Deputy Secretary, Pacific Development Group) and Mark Ramsden (Divisional Manager, Pacific Regional).

Agenda

- The meeting will discuss the proposed Polynesian Leaders Group Charter and other governance matters, s6(b)(i)

Meeting logistics

- This meeting will be held over lunch
- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

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Speaking notes

(Note that as New Zealand is an observer at the group, the following are "as needed".)

- New Zealand **welcomes the proposed PLG Charter. We want to remain actively engaged as an Observer** to the Group.
- s9(2)(j)
- s6(b)(i)

We are proud to support **Niue Ocean Wide as an example of Pacific leadership on ocean finance** and are actively engaging with our partner on sustainable finance for blue economy activities.

- s6(b)(i)

We'd be happy to stay in touch on these as the ideas develop.

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Leaders Dialogue with the President of the Asia Development Bank

Time and date: 2:00-3:00pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- Encourage the ADB President to continue to prioritise Bank resources in the Pacific, by acknowledging and advocating for the unique challenges faced by remote Small Island Developing States in the region.

Guests

- All Forum Members, CROP agencies and the Asia Development Bank

Agenda

- Opening remarks from Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Remarks from ADB President
- Remarks from Forum Leaders
- Reflections from ADB President
- Closing remarks from Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Biographies of Participants



Masato Kanda *[Muss-a-toe Kun-duh]* is the President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He assumed office on 24 February 2025, and New Zealand has supported his re-election to a second term in 2026. Under his leadership, ADB has significantly scaled up its support to the Asia-Pacific region, while securing the first amendment to the Bank's Charter in its 60-year history, enabling an increase in annual financing capacity by 50 percent. He previously served as a Special Advisor to Japan's Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

He can be addressed as "President Kanda".

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Speaking notes

- We welcome the significant growth in the ADB's Pacific portfolio over recent years (growing from US$0.55 billion in 2009 to US$4 billion in 2026), and its commitment to following a "differentiated approach" in supporting Small Island Developing States.
- By some metrics, ADB sits alongside New Zealand as the second-equal largest contributor of development finance in the Pacific (11% respectively of the 2024 total, with Australia accounting for 37%). The ADB has become an increasingly important player in helping the region address its infrastructure deficit, while also offering more support in the health and education sectors.
- We appreciate the ADB's responsiveness to the effects of the conflict in the Middle East, by adjusting existing emergency response mechanisms to allow Developing Member Countries (including in the Pacific) to address the price shock. This is an area of work where New Zealand and the ADB (along with Australia and the World Bank) continue to coordinate closely, including looking at how we can support the region's energy transition in the medium term.
- We wish Mr Kanda well for his election to a second term as President in November.*

* ***Note*** *that the election is uncontested and the Minister of Finance committed New Zealand's support by letter in July 2026.*

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Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders

Time and date: 3:00-4:00pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- To understand the priorities of Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders (PICL) members.

Guests

- This event will be hosted by US Deputy Secretary of State Landau and include PICL members. Australia and New Zealand are invited as observers.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Background

- The PICL's 20 members overlap with but are not the same as the Pacific Islands Forum, and do not include New Zealand or Australia. PICL members are: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Hawai'i State, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Republic of Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
- The PICL is touted as being "a forum for Pacific Island leaders to address shared issues, learn from each other's experiences, and develop common approaches to policy".

s6(a)

- Palau President Whipps is known to be a strong supporter of the PICL. Similarly, while the US is not a member in its own right, the PICL has traditionally provided an opportunity for Pacific leaders to directly engage US political leaders. In 2021, the 11th PICL Meeting included addresses by then-secretary of state, Anthony Blinken, and then-presidential special envoy for climate change, John Kerry.

Speaking notes

- Not required.

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55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting Opening Ceremony

Time and date: 6:30-8:30pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- Demonstrate New Zealand's respect for traditional protocols as an important part of relationships and dialogue.
- To interact informally with Forum Leaders and other VIP guests.

Guests

- We expect most Forum Leaders to attend.
- We also expect good attendance from Forum Dialogue Partners.
- The event is open to the public.
- s6(a)

Agenda

- An event programme will be provided to Leaders as they arrive.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Palau National Gymnasium (approx. 15-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Media

- New Zealand and local media will be present.

Speaking notes

- Not required.

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Leaders Dialogue with Civil Society and Private Sector

Time and date: 10:00am-11:00am, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- To acknowledge the important role that civil society organisations play in delivering development impact through the International Development Cooperation programme.
- To emphasise the range of ways New Zealand works with, and supports, the Pacific private sector to build their skills, connections and competitive advantage.

Guests

- Forum Members, Associate Members, Forum Country Observers, and CROP Agencies, alongside key Civil Society and Private Sector Representatives.

Agenda

Civil Society segment

- Introductory remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Civil Society to give remarks
- Response by Forum Leaders
- Closing remarks

Private Sector segment

- Introductory remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Private sector representatives to give remarks
- Response by Forum Leaders
- Closing remarks

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- This event is open to all delegates, with media present at the opening formalities.

Background

- This session, with Civil Society and the Private Sector, is styled as "an opportunity for inclusive and constructive dialogue on pertinent regional issues" but is usually a series of prepared statements.

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Speaking notes [if required]

- New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to engage with Civil Society and private sector organisations. We recognise the significant role of NGOs in the Pacific region.
- Through their in-country civil society partners, New Zealand NGOs deliver development at a community level across the Pacific, providing insights on local and community level challenges and community-based solutions.
- New Zealand supports our NGOs to delivery development outcomes through the Partnering for Impact programme. Through the programme, at least 60% of funding is targeted for the Pacific.
- In 2025/26 financial year our Foreign Ministry provided around $54 million to New Zealand NGOs for their development work in the Pacific and South-Southeast Asia.
- New Zealand NGOs co-invested an additional $7.75 million in 2025/26 to support the work delivered through Partnering for Impact.
- New Zealand also recognises the role of the private sector in driving Pacific economic development.
- We invest across the region to support the growth and resilience of key industries and businesses.
- Our private sector development programs engage with Pacific agriculture and tourism sectors, and support key private sector enablers such as digital connectivity and access to finance.

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Leaders Dialogue with Associate Members and Observers

Time and date: 11:00am-12:00pm, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- To join other Forum Leaders in engaging with Associate Members and Observers.

Participants

- Associate Members: American Samoa, Guam, Tokelau, and Wallis and Futuna; Timor Leste is an Observer.
- Observer organisations: the UN, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

Agenda

- Remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Associate Members and Country Observers give remarks
- Observer Organisations give remarks
- Response by Forum Leaders
- Closing remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- Media will be present at the opening formalities.

Background

- Forum Leaders decided in 2004 to create a category of 'Associate Membership' of the Pacific Islands Forum to promote closer contacts with non-sovereign Pacific territories, including Tokelau. Any territory in the Pacific Islands region may submit a written request to the Forum Secretary General, for the consideration of Leaders.
- Associate Members are entitled to attend and speak at the Plenary Session of the Forum Leaders' Meeting and other Leaders' meetings. They are not entitled to attend the Leaders' Retreat or participate in decisions.

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Speaking notes:

- We welcome the chance to speak on the important role Associate Members and Observers play as part of the Pacific Islands Forum Family.
- To Observers, we recognise the vital role you play in partnering with Forum Members in confronting shared challenges such as climate, illegal fishing, countering transnational organised crime and improving health and education for our peoples, and supporting economic development.
- New Zealand values deeply our partnerships with Associate Members, especially Tokelau. We are proud to celebrate our 100th Anniversary of Tokelau's constitutional relationship with New Zealand. New Zealand supports Tokelau's ongoing efforts to improve the livelihood of its people. We are proud of our joint achievements, especially in energy, education and health.
- We are also committed to supporting Tokelau's efforts to develop its economy, including by Tokelau benefitting from the sustainable harvesting of its fisheries.
- We wish all Associate Members and Observers the best for Leaders Week.

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Ocean Partnership Roundtable

Time and date: 2:00-6:00pm, Sunday, 30 August

Objectives

- s6(a)

Guests

- All meeting delegates, Special Guests and Invited Guests s6(a)

Agenda

- 2.00pm: Opening remarks and perspectives from Pacific Leaders and strategic partners
- 3.00pm Roundtable 1: Pacific-Led Priorities and Implementation Opportunities (speaking notes provided below).

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10 minutes' drive from the Palau Pacific Resort hotel)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Media

- New Zealand and local media will be present.

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Speaking notes

Roundtable One: Pacific-Led Priorities and Implementation Opportunities (3.00pm - 4.15pm)

- Thank you chair and delegates we're pleased to speak briefly on behalf of New Zealand in this discussion on mobilising finance and partnerships in the Pacific.
- The Pacific's ocean is one of our region's greatest assets. Realising its potential and protecting its values will require sustained investment and strong partnerships.
- In the Pacific, success will depend on attracting and retaining responsible and responsive investment. We need to build serious partnerships to ensure Pacific countries can realise the benefits of their ocean resources.
- New Zealand is a partner in a range of regional initiatives that aim to provide flexible an accessible finance to help build ocean and climate resilience in the region. We encourage our partners to invest in these Pacific-led solutions, which include the Pacific Resilience Facility, efforts led by our CROP partners, including the important work of the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, and SPC's Flagship programmes on ocean and climate.
- New Zealand is also a proud partner, and Executive Board member of the Global Fund for Coral Reefs. This initiative is providing access to finance for sustainable businesses and helping build the resilience of the region's critical coral reefs. We also encourage others to join us and support these efforts.

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Ocean Reception hosted by H.E. Whipps Jr.

Time and date: 6:00pm, Sunday, 30 August

Runsheet

- 6:30pm: Arrival of Leaders
- 6:40pm Welcome and Prayer
- 6:50pm Opening Remarks by Secretary General
- 7:00pm Remarks by Minister Peters
- 7:10pm Remarks by Bezos Earth Fund representative
- 7:20pm Closing remarks by Palau President Whipps

Objectives

- To interact with Forum Leaders and show support for President Whipps as host and Forum Chair.
- To highlight New Zealand's leading role in creating successful Pacific Ocean climate initiatives and partnerships.

Guests

- All meeting delegates, Special Guests and Invited Guests s6(a)

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Palau Pacific Resort
- Dress code: Pacific Formal
- You have been asked to give short remarks at the start of the event, alongside President Whipps, Prime Minister Rabuka, Forum Secretary General Waqa and a representative of the Bezos Earth Fund (which has made a significant commitment to the Niue Ocean Wide Partnership).

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Speaking notes

- President Whipps, Heads of Government, Honourable Ministers, Secretary General, Pacific Ocean Commissioner, representatives from across the Pacific, and distinguished guests.
- It is a pleasure to join you this evening to celebrate Pacific Ocean leadership, and discuss what's possible for our region, the vast Blue Pacific Continent we call home.
- We are proud to support the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner and its leadership in bringing Pacific countries together. Commissioner, we value the serious contribution you and your office make to this important work.

Backing Pacific Priorities

- The importance New Zealand places on our region is no secret.
- In our travels to all Pacific Islands Forum countries over the last three years, one message has come through time and time again: the importance of the ocean as a crucial part in our economies and a cornerstone of our livelihoods.
- New Zealand is committed to working alongside you to strengthen climate and ocean resilience, support sustainable livelihoods and ensure the Pacific realises the benefits from our ocean.
- New Zealand has strongly supported the Pacific Resilience Facility through a $20 million pledge. We are vigorously knocking on doors and seeking Pacific Resilience Facility pledges across the globe from other regions, particularly in Europe, Middle East and North America. As the saying goes – 'if you don't ask, you'll never know,' and we'll continue with these efforts to reach the fund's US$500 million target.

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- Once fully capitalised, the PRF will provide accessible grants to help our region build climate and disaster resilience at the community level. We need more contributions from our Partners to ensure it can deliver for the Pacific.
- Outside of formal mechanisms like the PRF, New Zealand is focussed on supporting greater public and private sector investment into the Pacific. Our Blue Pacific Ocean is at the heart of all economic activity in our countries – just like it was when our ancestors departed the shores of Asia many hundreds of years ago. This is why New Zealand strongly support investment in port facilities and maritime trade and we look forward to discussing these important issues this week.
- We strongly believe that our Ocean's fisheries is a bounty that can be managed in a sustainable way to ensure the prosperity of future generations. This is why we have invested in SPC's 'Climate Science for Ensuring Pacific Tuna Access' Program. Tuna remains one of the Pacific's most valuable economic resources, yet science shows stocks are shifting in search of cooler waters.
- SPC's programme is helping us better understand these changes, and to strengthen our economic and climate resilience. It is also a good example of how a strategic investment can attract further support. By bringing in other Partners we have helped this important work to expand across the region.
- We are supporting marine spatial planning efforts across the region, working with countries to balance economic opportunity, climate resilience and the sustainable management of marine resources.

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- Through this work, we were pleased to support Palau to develop its first Sustainable Ocean Policy, launched earlier this month. It is an important milestone for Palau and demonstrates Pacific leadership delivering solutions that work for its people and the resources they depend on.

Conclusion

- In the Pacific, success will depend on attracting and retaining responsible and responsive investment.
- In 2027, New Zealand will have the privilege of hosting the Pacific Islands Forum. Our discussions today, on the future of our ocean, will help shape our preparations for that role.
- We will continue working closely with you as we prepare for that responsibility so that when New Zealand takes the chair, we will do so with a clear understanding of the Pacific's priorities, interests, and ambitions.
- Thank you.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Polynesian Leaders Group (PLG) Lunch Meeting

Time and date: 12.45-1.50pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- To understand the priorities of Polynesian Leaders and discuss key issues in advance of the wider suite of Forum meetings later in the week.
- To seek the views of Polynesian Leaders on priority areas of focus for New Zealand's hosting and chairing of the Forum from next year.

Participants

- Forum Leaders from Polynesian countries, including the Ulu of Tokelau. New Zealand is an "observer" in the Group; the proposed Group Charter will define this more formally.
- You will be accompanied by Bernadette Cavanagh (Deputy Secretary, Pacific Development Group) and Mark Ramsden (Divisional Manager, Pacific Regional).

Agenda

- The meeting will discuss the proposed Polynesian Leaders Group Charter and other governance matters, along with Tongan proposals for a Polynesia Ocean Conference in 2027, and two side events at the 2026 United Nations General Assembly.

Meeting logistics

- This meeting will be held over lunch
- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Speaking notes

(Note that as New Zealand is an observer at the group, the following are "as needed".)

- New Zealand **welcomes the proposed PLG Charter. We want to remain actively engaged as an Observer** to the Group.
- s9(2)(j)
- s6(b)(i)

  We are proud to support **Niue Ocean Wide as an example of Pacific leadership on ocean finance** and are actively engaging with our partner on sustainable finance for blue economy activities.
- s6(b)(i)

  We'd be happy to stay in touch on these as the ideas develop.

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Leaders Dialogue with the President of the Asia Development Bank

Time and date: 2:00-3:00pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- Encourage the ADB President to continue to prioritise Bank resources in the Pacific, by acknowledging and advocating for the unique challenges faced by remote Small Island Developing States in the region.

Guests

- All Forum Members, CROP agencies and the Asia Development Bank

Agenda

- Opening remarks from Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Remarks from ADB President
- Remarks from Forum Leaders
- Reflections from ADB President
- Closing remarks from Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Biographies of Participants



Masato Kanda *[Muss-a-toe Kun-duh]* is the President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He assumed office on 24 February 2025, and New Zealand has supported his re-election to a second term in 2026. Under his leadership, ADB has significantly scaled up its support to the Asia-Pacific region, while securing the first amendment to the Bank's Charter in its 60-year history, enabling an increase in annual financing capacity by 50 percent. He previously served as a Special Advisor to Japan's Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

He can be addressed as "President Kanda".

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Speaking notes

- We welcome the significant growth in the ADB's Pacific portfolio over recent years (growing from US$0.55 billion in 2009 to US$4 billion in 2026), and its commitment to following a "differentiated approach" in supporting Small Island Developing States.
- By some metrics, ADB sits alongside New Zealand as the second-equal largest contributor of development finance in the Pacific (11% respectively of the 2024 total, with Australia accounting for 37%). The ADB has become an increasingly important player in helping the region address its infrastructure deficit, while also offering more support in the health and education sectors.
- We appreciate the ADB's responsiveness to the effects of the conflict in the Middle East, by adjusting existing emergency response mechanisms to allow Developing Member Countries (including in the Pacific) to address the price shock. This is an area of work where New Zealand and the ADB (along with Australia and the World Bank) continue to coordinate closely, including looking at how we can support the region's energy transition in the medium term.
- We wish Mr Kanda well for his election to a second term as President in November.*

* ***Note*** *that the election is uncontested and the Minister of Finance committed New Zealand's support by letter in July 2026.*

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Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders

Time and date: 3:00-4:00pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- To understand the priorities of Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders (PICL) members.

Guests

- This event will be hosted by US Deputy Secretary of State Landau and include PICL members. Australia and New Zealand are invited as observers.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Background

- The PICL's 20 members overlap with but are not the same as the Pacific Islands Forum, and do not include New Zealand or Australia. PICL members are: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Hawai'i State, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Republic of Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
- The PICL is touted as being "a forum for Pacific Island leaders to address shared issues, learn from each other's experiences, and develop common approaches to policy".

s6(a)

- Palau President Whipps is known to be a strong supporter of the PICL. Similarly, while the US is not a member in its own right, the PICL has traditionally provided an opportunity for Pacific leaders to directly engage US political leaders. In 2021, the 11th PICL Meeting included addresses by then-secretary of state, Anthony Blinken, and then-presidential special envoy for climate change, John Kerry.

Speaking notes

- Not required.

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Coffee with Norway and Denmark

Time and date: 11am, Tuesday 1 September

Objectives

- To encourage Norway's and Denmark's engagement in the region, including their planned contributions to the Pacific Resilience Facility.

Guests

- Norway Special Political Envoy for the Foreign Minister, Milla Skaug Ødegaard
- Demark Danish Special Envoy for Indo-Pacific, Marcus Carter Mathiesen

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Palau Pacific Resort

Biographies of Participants

	**Milla Skaug Ødegaard** *[MEE-lah SKOWG UR-deh-gore]* is a Norwegian Labour Party politician and Political Adviser to Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs. Born in 1999, she has a background in law, local government, and Norway's UN delegation in New York. She has worked on international issues including climate diplomacy, Ukraine, and peace-building efforts in the Middle East. You have not met her before.
	**Marcus Carter Mathiasen** is a Danish career diplomat who serves as Denmark's recently appointed Special Envoy for Indo-Pacific and Deputy Director for the Department for Asia, Oceania, Latin America & The Caribbean at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (since mid-2026). Earlier in his career, he served as First Secretary at the Embassy of Denmark in Washington, DC, and as Special Assistant to the President of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, as private secretary to Former UNGA President Mogens Lykketoft. You have not met Mr Mathiasen before.

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Background

- Norway plans to announce their contribution of NOK10 million (approximately NZ$1.8 million) during the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Week.
- Denmark will announce their contribution of DKK15 million (approximately NZ$4.1m) at Leaders Week or at the pre-COP in October.

Speaking notes:

- **Bilateral relationship Norway:** Reinforce the value New Zealand attaches to our relationship with Norway and our shared commitment to the international rules-based system. Note your visit to Norway in October 2025, and your recent meeting with the Norwegian Foreign Affairs Minister Eide at the ASEAN FMM.
- **Bilateral Relationship Denmark:** Reinforce the value New Zealand attaches to our relationship with Denmark and our shared commitment to the international rules-based system. Note your visit to Copenhagen in October 2025.
- **Pacific Resilience Facility:** Reflect on Pacific regional challenges. Welcome Norway's and Denmark's increasing efforts and engagements in the Pacific, including their planned contributions to the Pacific Resilience Facility.

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Leaders Dialogue with Forum Dialogue Partners

Time and date: 1:00pm-2:00pm, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- Affirm the valuable role that partners play in the Pacific and reiterate New Zealand's view that fostering relationships with Dialogue Partners is a critical function of the Forum.
- Highlight our expectation that Partners will align their support with the region's priorities.

Participants

- Forum Dialogue Partners and Forum Leaders.

Agenda

- Openings remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Forum Dialogue Partners represented at Ministerial level give remarks
- Forum Leaders give remarks
- Closing remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- Present for opening formalities only.

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Speaking notes

- New Zealand welcomes the significant support to our region from our Dialogue Partners. Your support is critical if our region is to make progress. This is not flattery. Since 2008, our Partners have contributed over US$60.2bn of development support to our region.
- We want to continue working closely with you through a partnership mechanism that delivers benefits to both Forum Members and our Partners. We need structured, high-quality engagement with all our Partners, irrespective of status.
- This process must put the Forum in the driving seat. It is critical Partners respect our priorities and procedures. Partners must support our efforts to build Forum centrality by aligning with the 2050 Strategy.
- We also remind our Partners that we have declared our region an Ocean of Peace. And that the Treaty of Rarotonga establishes the South Pacific as a Nuclear Free Zone.
- The spirit of hospitality runs deep in our Pacific region, as does respect. We have seen this balance work for others, including through our own experience as a partner of ASEAN. New Zealand is committed to seeing it work here too.
- We look forward to concluding deliberations on the new mechanism for Dialogue Partners' engagement with the Forum this week and implementing the new modalities for engagement as hosts of the next Leaders' Meeting in Auckland.
- s6(b)(i)

  We welcome the US's commitment to deliver for the Pacific through its foreign assistance and acknowledge the scope of new initiatives the US has announced at the Pacific Islands Forum.

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Joint Announcement on Penrhyn Wharf project

Time and date: 9:00am, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- Joint announcement by the Cook Islands, New Zealand and the United States that we will work together to deliver a major wharf upgrade on the island of Penrhyn in the northern Cook Islands

Guests

- US: Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau
- NZ: Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Cook Islands: Prime Minister Mark Brown

Agenda

- Remarks
- Signing
- Photos (no media questions)

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Media

- A joint press release is in development to be released by all three countries alongside this announcement.
- New Zealand, Pacific and US media are expected to attend the event.

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Speaking notes

- Prime Minister Brown, Deputy Secretary Landau, distinguished guests. It is an honour today we are very pleased in partnership with our Cook Island and American friends to announce our intention to deliver a major wharf upgrade project in Penrhyn in the northern Cook Islands, in partnership.
- New Zealand and the US will both provide funding for the project. New Zealand will contribute $17.5 million and lead the implementation of the project, working closely with the Cook Islands Government.
- This is great news for the people of Penrhyn and the Cook Islands.
- It is also a sign of just how close New Zealand's partnerships are with both the US and the Cook Islands.
- Upgrading the Penrhyn wharf has been a priority for the Cooks Islands for many years.
- The wharf upgrade will improve safety, security and connectivity across the Cook Islands' northern group. Penrhyn is blessed with a strategic location in the Pacific and we strongly believe that the project will enhance the Cook Islands' integration into the global economy, particularly between North America and New Zealand and Australia.
- As well as helping local communities, it will boost efforts to combat transnational crime and illegal fishing in the region, which all of our countries have a stake in.
- This is a very welcome and significant investment by the US too. We welcome that commitment in our region and hope it can be a model for future collaborations between us.

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- We are all committed to a stable, prosperous and resilient region and this investment will support those goals.
- We look forward to working together to make this a success.

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BILATERALS AND PRIORITY PULL-ASIDES: FORUM MEMBERS

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Palau: Minister of State Gustav Aitaro, Palau

Time and date: TBC Lunch at Elilai Restaurant: 12pm, Sunday 30 August



Minister Aitaro [pron: *eye-tah-row*] has been Palau's Minister of State since September 2021. Aitaro was re-appointed in early 2025 s6(a)

Aitaro has a long career in diplomacy, having worked at the Ministry of State for two decades, including as Director (Secretary equivalent). He later served as the Special Assistant to the Office of the President on Foreign Matters. He is personable and a good friend of New Zealand.

You met in August in the margins of the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in Suva.

Checklist of Issues

Pacific

- Congratulate the Minister for Palau's hosting of PIFLM. New Zealand looks forward to working alongside Palau on the Troika.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- Endorse Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Naoero Agreement's (PNA's) Vessel Day Scheme.

Bilateral relationship

- Note the importance of President Whipps' visit to New Zealand in April, the first official visit by a Palauan President.
- Note New Zealand has since disbursed NZ$2.2 million as grant funding to support economic reform in Palau, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank.

(If raised) NZ Support to Palau hospital

- s6(a) Note we are looking at ways in which we can contribute to the project as it progresses.

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Naoero ["NOW-ero"]: President David Adeang

Time and date: 3:15pm – 3:45pm, Tuesday 1 September



His Excellency David Adeang ["ah-dee-yung"] was re-elected as President following Nauru's October 2025 general election. Adeang has served as President since October 2023 and has been a Member of Parliament since 2001.

He has held several senior ministerial portfolios, including finance and justice, and is one of Nauru's most experienced political figures.

You last met in September 2025 in Port Moresby during PNG's 50th anniversary of independence.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Recall our visit in 2024 and our gratitude for President Adeang's hosting.
- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Camilla Solomon as Naoero's first High Commissioner to New Zealand in 2025, cross-accredited from Canberra.
- **Development:** Reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to supporting Naoero's long-term economic resilience. Highlight New Zealand's contribution of NZ$1 million annually (2019–2034) to the Nauru Intergenerational Trust Fund. As of June 2026, the Fund held assets of approximately AUD$479 million.
- **Trade:** Seek an update on Naoero's consideration of ratifying PACER Plus. What can New Zealand do to support this?
- **Tokelau fisheries:** Endorse Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Naoero Agreement's (PNA's) Vessel Day Scheme.
- s6(a)

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The Cook Islands: Prime Minister Mark Brown

Time and date: 9.30am, Tuesday 1 September



Preliminary results of the 12 August Cook Islands election show **Hon Mark Brown** is very likely to be re-elected as Prime Minister of the Cook Islands Government for the third time. After a post-election deal with three independent MPs from Mangaia, his Cook Islands Party is on track to win two thirds of the seats in Parliament.

Ministerial portfolios have not yet been confirmed. However, prior to the election, Brown held Ministerial responsibilities for Finance and Economic Management, Attorney General, Public Service Commission, Police, Seabed Minerals Authority, Tourism, Energy and Renewable Energy, Outer Island Special Projects, and Telecommunications.

You last met Prime Minister Brown on 1 April during your visit to Rarotonga for the signing of the Declaration on Defence and Security.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Cook Islands Election:** Congratulate Brown on his successful re-election as Prime Minister.
- **Relationship normalisation**: Welcome the normalisation of the relationship after a challenging period.
- Underscore New Zealand's efforts to deliver on the Declaration on Defence and Security, including to again hold NZDF Exercise Tropic Twilight in the Cook Islands – this time in Penrhyn (last year it was in Mauke).
- **Penryhn Wharf:** Note our pleasure to be investing in Penryhn Wharf in partnership with the Cook Islands and US, with New Zealand as implementing partner.
- s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Republic of the Marshall Islands: President Dr Hilda Heine

Time and date: 5-5.30pm, Monday 31 August



Her Excellency Dr Hilda Heine ["hi-nee"] was the first female President of RMI from 2016-2020 and was re-elected in 2024. s6(a) She has an extensive background in education, including as Minister of Education, President of the College of the Marshall Islands, and Pro-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific. She was the first Marshallese person to earn a doctorate.

You both attended PIFLM in Tonga in late August 2024, following your visit to RMI in earlier that month.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral**: Highlight New Zealand's support to the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) on climate-induced loss and damage, and through technical assistance to the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA) to strengthen resource management and combat illegal fishing. Emphasise New Zealand's commitment to continuing support in these areas.
- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Junior Aini as RMI's first Ambassador to New Zealand in April 2025, cross-accredited from Suva.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Climate:** Acknowledge the pre-eminent threat climate change poses for RMI. Note New Zealand is exploring ways to support RMI's climate adaptation and we're lobbying hard for external Pacific Resiliency Facility contributions. Seek President Heine's views on her priorities.

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Solomon Islands: Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Rick Houenipwela

Time and date: 11:45am – 12:15pm, Tuesday 1 September



Hon Rick Houenipwela *(Ho-en-ip-weller)*, commonly known as Rick Hou *(Ho)*, was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade in May 2026. A former Prime Minister (2017-19), he entered politics in 2010 following a distinguished career with the Central Bank of Solomon Islands which included serving as Governor, s6(a) He visited New Zealand as Prime Minister in 2018.

You both attend the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in August but last met formally with Hou when he accompanied Prime Minister Wale to New Zealand in early June.

Checklist of Issues

- **Rescue of NZ hikers:** Reiterate our thanks for the rescue of the two NZ hikers in Guadulcanal that we included in our letter of 4 August and we appreciated your response of 20 August.
- s6(a)
- **RSE**: Share that, s6(b)(i) New Zealand is now offering additional support for Solomon Islands' participation in the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme. This includes up to NZD 600,000 in grant funding to the Solomon Islands Labour Mobility Unit.
- **Regional security treaty proposal:** Express interest in Prime Minister Wale's proposal for a Forum regional security treaty, s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Tonga: Minister for His Majesty's Diplomatic Services, HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala

Time and date: TBC



Heir to the throne **HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala** [address as: "Your Royal Highness" and subsequently "sir"]. A small bow on meeting would be respectful. The Crown Prince is Minister for His Majesty's Diplomatic Services and Minister for His Majesty's Armed Forces.

You both attended the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in Suva, 7 August.

Checklist of Issues

- **Crown Prince Visit:** Welcome an official visit from the Crown Prince to New Zealand later this year and that we look forward to hosting him for lunch on 1 October.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i) Note we were pleased to host Lord Privy Seal Viliami Malolo in August. s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii)
- s6(a)
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)
- **PIF Troika:** Acknowledge Tonga's leadership to the Pacific Islands Forum as part of the current Troika.

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Palau: President Surangel Whipps Jr

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



His Excellency Surangel Whipps Jr has been President of Palau since 2020. He was re-elected in 2024 for a second four-year term. Constitutionally, he will not be eligible to run for the Presidency again in the 2028 election. Whipps continues to hold the finance and education portfolios while his nominations are held up in the Senate. Prior to his Presidency, Whipps served two terms as a Senator in the Palau National Congress.

You last met when hosting President Whipps for lunch at Harbour Society in Auckland, during his visit in April this year.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Congratulate Palau for hosting the Pacific Islands Forum and note that you look forward to working alongside Palau on the Troika.
- Note the importance of President Whipps' visit to New Zealand in April, the first official visit by a Palauan President.
- Following the visit New Zealand disbursed NZ$2.2 million as grant funding to support economic reform in Palau, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank.
- **Tokelau Fisheries:** Endorse Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Naoero Agreement's (PNA's) Vessel Day Scheme.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Palau Hospital** s6(a)

  We will look closely at the US feasibility study when it is finalised, including on whether we can make a contribution to the development.
- s6(a), s6(d)

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Papua New Guinea: Prime Minister James Marape

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Hon James Marape has been Prime Minister since 2019, after previously serving as Finance Minister. The son of a pastor, Marape is a devoted Seventh-day Adventist and a keen golfer.

You last met Prime Minister Marape in September 2025 for PNG's Independence Day.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Highlight the strong momentum in the bilateral relationship. Since your August 2025 visit to Port Moresby, we have advanced several key commitments, including expanding our small business programme into the Highlands, supporting PNG trade negotiators, strengthening defence cooperation and deepening policing ties with the RPNGC.
- **Bougainville:** Note New Zealand welcomed the Parties' (Papua New Guinea Government and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville) endorsement of the Melanesian Framework and Joint consultations Report on 5 August.
- **El Nino response:** Note New Zealand concern about the potential humanitarian impacts of a severe El Niño weather event. Note we are keen to discuss how partners can best support PNG's response efforts.
- s6(a)

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Tuvalu: Prime Minister Feleti Teo

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Hon Feleti Teo [*pron.* Fell-ety Te-oh] was unanimously selected as Prime Minister of Tuvalu on 26 February 2024. Teo spent the past 23 years in prominent positions in regional Pacific institutions, including as the Deputy Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum (2007-2013), and the Executive Director of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (2014-2023).

You last met during Teo's Guest of Government visit to New Zealand in March 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Pre-COP:** Note New Zealand looks forward to supporting Tuvalu to host a successful Pre-COP special leaders' component. New Zealand has committed a C-130 aircraft to assist with pre-COP logistics.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Tokelau fisheries:** Note New Zealand's deep concern about Tokelau's exclusion from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement Vessel Day scheme (PNA VDS).
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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The Federated States of Micronesia: President Wesley Simina

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



His Excellency Wesley Simina [pron: *see-me-nah*] is a long-standing figure in FSM politics and was sworn in as President in May 2023. Climate change is a key focus for Simina's foreign policy agenda. Simina's domestic policy is focused on national unity – given FSM is made up of four geographically and culturally distinct states. Prior to becoming President, Simina served as Speaker of the FSM Congress from 2015 to 2023 and as Governor of Chuuk State from 2005 to 2011.

You both attended PIFLM in Tonga in late August 2024, following your visit to FSM earlier that month.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Drinking water programme:** Highlight New Zealand's support for early childhood development and safe drinking water in FSM in partnership with UNICEF. New Zealand also provides technical assistance to National Oceanic Resource Management Authority to strengthen marine resource management and combat illegal fishing.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- [*if raised: climate* change] Acknowledge the threat climate change poses for FSM. Note New Zealand is exploring ways to support FSM's climate adaptation. Seek President Simina's views on his priorities.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Samoa: Deputy Prime Minister Afioga Mulipola Anarosa Ale-Molio'o

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Hon. Afioga Mulipola [Moo-lee-poh-lah] **Anarosa Ale-Molio'o** took on the role of Deputy Prime Minister in March 2026, in addition to the Minister of Finance portfolio. Mulipola made history in 2021 as Samoa's first female Minister of Finance under former-PM Fiame's Government.

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

and is one of two returning Cabinet Ministers after the FAST Party's election victory in 2025. She is an auditor and accountant by profession.

You last met Mulipola while in Apia during the Independence Day Anniversary in June 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- Acknowledge the importance of the PIF and highlight Samoa as a founding member of the PIF plays an important role as a voice that upholds democracy, good governance, and a peaceful region.
- **Hosting 2027:** New Zealand looks forward to warmly welcoming Samoa and the rest of the PIF membership to New Zealand for our hosting of the PIF Leaders' Meeting in 2027, consistent with our longstanding cooperation in advancing Pacific regionalism.
- s6(a)
- s6(b)(i)

  Acknowledge Samoa's vulnerability to higher fuel prices which will flow through the economy and the risk of supply shocks down the track. New Zealand will continue to work closely with Samoa if they need technical or other support to help them get through the crisis.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

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Pacific Ocean Commissioner: Dr Filimon Manoni

Time and date: Pull aside during Evening Ocean Reception, 6:00pm, Sunday 30 August.



Dr Filimon Manoni was appointed the Pacific Ocean Commissioner in 2023. He previously served as the Deputy Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (2020 – 2023) and Legal Adviser to the Secretariat (2018 – 2020), where he advised members on issues such as ocean governance, nuclear issues, and climate change. Dr Manoni has previously served as the Attorney General for the Republic of the Marshall Islands and as a Legal Adviser to the Forum Fisheries Agency. You previously met in January 2026.

Checklist of issues:

- **OPOC's Regional Role** – Acknowledge the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner's (OPOC) important role in representing and advocating for Pacific interests in global ocean forums, facilitating development of regional perspectives on key issues (such as Deep-Sea Minerals and Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions (BBNJ)), and supporting countries to implement global and regional agreements.
- **PIF 2027** – Reiterate New Zealand's commitment to working closely with Pacific partners in preparation for hosting the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in 2027. The Commissioner has indicated interest in how New Zealand will take forward ocean priorities in PIF 2027.
- *[If raised **Commissioner Reappointment**]* – Acknowledge Dr Manoni has formally requested to be reappointed as Commissioner for a second three-year term. [Leaders will discuss Dr Manoni's reappointment s9(2)(f)(iv)
- *[If raised **OPOC Funding**]* – Note that discussions on funding and the future governance and institutional alignment of OPOC remain underway, and we look forward to continued engagement on this matter.

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BILATERALS AND PRIORITY PULL-ASIDES: FORUM DIALOGUE PARTNERS

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Chile: Minister of Foreign Affairs: Francisco Pérez Mackenna

Time and date: TBC: 11-11.30pm, Sunday 30 August



Minister Francisco Pérez Mackenna [Frahn-SIS-coh PEH-rez mah-KEH-nah] was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in March 2026. He is a prominent Chilean businessman who served as the CEO of one of Latin America's biggest holding companies (Quiñenco) for almost two decades. He is married with eight children, and likes race cars, hunting, and tennis. Minister Pérez Mackenna has professed an affinity for New Zealand, having visited several times in a personal capacity. You have not met previously but had an introductory phone call in May 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Reaffirm the value we attach to our relationship with Chile, which is one of the most import in Latin America. Reflect on your visit to Chile in March.
- **PIF:** Acknowledge Chile's connections to the Pacific and welcome its decision to attend PIF at ministerial level. You may want to share your perspectives on visiting Rapa Nui/Easter Island.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Countering illegal drugs:** Emphasise the seriousness we attach to working together to disrupt the flow of drugs to the Pacific. This is demonstrated by our establishment of new Police Counsellor and Customs Counsellor positions, both based in Bogota with a regional remit.
- *[If raised, partnerships mechanism]*: Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.
- s6(a)

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Japan: State Minister of Foreign Affairs Iwao HORII

Time and date: TBC 6:00pm, Sunday 30 August



Mr Iwao HORII *[pron. Hor-ree-ee]* has been a State Minister for Foreign Affairs since September 2023. He was first elected to the Upper House in 2013 and has previously served as Deputy Secretary-General of the LDP and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Horii is a respected politician and a friend of New Zealand. He enjoys travelling, rugby, war-time history, and eating gourmet food.

You met Horii in February 2026 when he visited New Zealand. He has travelled in the Pacific s6(a)

Checklist of Issues

- **Visit:** Acknowledge your recent visit to Tokyo, which made clear the strategic alignment between our countries, including in relation to the Pacific.
- **Bilateral:** Note our desire to uplift our bilateral relationship, as we celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations in 2027.
- Welcome Japan's continued support for Pacific priorities, including its important development assistance to the region.
- s6(a)

[If raised, partnerships mechanism]

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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United Kingdom: Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Indo-Pacific, Baroness Rosie Winterton

Time and date: 11-11.30am, Monday 31 August



The Rt Hon Baroness Winterton was appointed in July 2026. Baroness Winterton's responsibilities also include small island developing states (SIDS). A senior Labour politician, she served as MP for Doncaster Central from 1997 to 2024, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons from 2017 to 2024 and has held ministerial roles across health, transport, work and pensions, local government and justice. Most recently, she served as the UK's Trade Envoy to Bangladesh. Baroness Winterton has not visited New Zealand or the Pacific Islands region in any official capacity.

This is your first meeting with Baroness Winterton.

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Checklist of Issues:

- Congratulate Baroness Winterton on her appointment as UK Under-Secretary of State for Indo-Pacific and ask what her top priorities will be in her new role. Note we appreciated her predecessor Sima Malhotra's focus on our region.
- **Strategic challenges:** Encourage the UK to stay engaged in the Pacific and share perspectives on geostrategic developments in the region.
- **Development:** Highlight the chance for the UK to make a meaningful contribution to the Pacific s6(a) by focussing on areas where it has expertise; and on advocacy for Pacific countries and SIDS issues in multilateral institutions.
- **PRF contribution:** Encourage the UK to support regional priorities by contributing to the Pacific Resilience Facility.
- **Maritime security:** Acknowledge the UK contribution to Pacific maritime security through the deployment of offshore patrol vessels in coordination with New Zealand and Fiji.
- **COP:** Note New Zealand looks forward to joining the UK at Pre-COP to showcase the progress of the US$100 million TIDES blended finance fund for renewable energy in the Pacific, of which NZ$40 million is funded by NZ (NZ$16 million) and the UK (NZ$24 million).

*[If raised, **PIF partnerships mechanism**]*

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

France: Minister Delegate for Francophonie, International Partnerships and French Nationals Abroad Éléonore Caroit

Time and date: 9.30-10am, Tuesday 1 September



Éléonore Caroit *[pron: ay-lay-oh-NOR ka-RWAH]* has served in her current ministerial portfolio since October 2025. A French-Dominican lawyer specialising in international arbitration, she practised in Paris, New York and Geneva before entering politics. Elected to the French National Assembly in 2022 to represent French citizens in Latin America and the Caribbean, she served as Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs Committee and as a board member of the French Development Agency (AFD).

Checklist of issues

- **France and Pacific:** We appreciate our longstanding cooperation with France in the Pacific. For example, maritime surveillance and disaster response under the FRANZ programme, and police cooperation against transnational, serious and organised crime.
- **Regional security:** Note our strong interest in deepening the Forum's regional security architecture. We will work to ensure that proposals are appropriate for all Members, in line with their respective arrangements and competencies.
- **New Caledonia/French Polynesia:** Reiterate New Zealand's desire to be a helpful and constructive partner s6(a) Note New Zealand's ongoing interest in practical support to New Caledonia, including developing follow up initiatives to the successful July 2025 New Caledonia Study Tour to New Zealand focussed on economic development and the Māori economy.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- *[If raised, **partnerships mechanism**]* Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region. We cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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Singapore: Minister of Foreign Affairs Vivian Balakrishnan

Time and date: *Informal lunch, 12pm, Tuesday 1 September*



Dr Vivian Balakrishnan has been Singapore's Foreign Minister since 2015, and a Member of Parliament since 2001. s6(a)

Minister Balakrishnan last attended PIF in 2023, marking Singapore's first engagement with the Forum as a Dialogue Partner. You last met Minister Balakrishnan at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting in July.

Checklist of issues

- **Pacific engagement:** Welcome Singapore's continued political level engagement in the Pacific. s6(a)
- We want to work more closely with Singapore on Pacific issues. s6(a)
- The Pacific is heavily dependent on Singapore for fuel. s6(a)
- s6(b)(i)

  What engagement has Singapore had to date with other ASEAN partners?
- The outcomes from PIFLM this year will be key to understanding where ASEAN-PIF engagement can best be aligned with our respective regional priorities.
- s6(b)(i)

s6(a)

- s6(a)

[If raised, ***partnerships mechanism****]*

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- s6(a)

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United States: Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau

Time and date: 6:15pm, Tuesday 1 September



Christopher Landau commenced his role as Deputy Secretary of State in March 2025.

Secretary Rubio has delegated the Pacific portfolio to Landau s9(2)(g)(i)
After PIF, he will travel on to the Federated States of Micronesia and the Solomon Islands, having recently hosted Prime Minister Wale in Washington. s6(a)

You last with Landau in April 2026 in Washington. The discussion focused on coordination with the US in the Pacific and the impact of the war in Iran on Pacific economies.

Checklist of Issues:

- **US/PIF:** Congratulate Landau on the impressive scope of new initiatives the US will announce at PIF and welcome US Ambassador Novelly's prioritisation of travel to Samoa and the Cook Islands early in his term.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Penrhyn project:** Welcome the positive outcome on the Penrhyn wharf project and the substantial US investment.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

[If raised, ***partnerships mechanism]***

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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s6(a)

- s6(a)

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Germany: Parliamentary State Secretary of the Environment Ministry Bettina Hagedorn

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Bettina Hagedorn *[beh-TEE-nah HAH-geh-dorn]* is a senior German Social Democratic Party (SPD) politician and long-serving Member of the Bundestag, representing Schleswig-Holstein since 2002. She is an experienced politician particularly in the finance/budgetary space.

Since April 2026 she has served as Parliamentary State Secretary – akin to an Associate Minister - at Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. She has a strong personal interest in marine conservation and the protection of the Baltic Sea, which neighbours her electorate.

Address as State Secretary Hagedorn.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Germany and Pacific:** Welcome Germany's increased engagement with the Pacific, including the opening of an Embassy in Suva in 2023, formal diplomatic recognition of Niue in 2026, and pledged contribution to the Pacific Resilience Facility.
- Emphasise the importance of sustained and credible engagement with the Pacific. Note that Foreign Minister Wadephul and the Bundestag's Germany-Pacific Friendship Group visited the Pacific earlier this year.

*[If raised, **partnerships mechanism**]*

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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BIOGRAPHIES: FORUM MEMBERS AND TOKELAU

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Australia: Prime Minister Anthony Albanese



Hon Anthony Albanese was re-elected for a second three-year term on 3 May 2025, becoming the first Prime Minister since John Howard to lead his party to consecutive election victories. With such a resounding mandate, much of Albanese's first-term Cabinet remain in their roles. Albanese has been the leader of the Australian Labor Party since 2019 and the MP for the NSW division of Grayndler since 1996. He was born in Sydney and studied economics at the University of Sydney. He is married to Jodie Haydon, and has one son from his previous marriage.

Checklist of Issues:

- Reiterate New Zealand's interest in exploring joining the Ocean of Peace Alliance s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Fiji: Prime Minister, Sitiveni Rabuka



Hon Sitiveni Rabuka [*pron.* See-the-veh-knee Ram-boo-kah] became Fiji's Prime Minister for the second time in December 2022. PM Rabuka heads up the People's Alliance Party and leads a three-way Coalition Government. Fiji's next election is due by February 2027 (date yet to be set), with constitutional reform to be considered before then.

s9(2)(a)

s6(a)

Checklist of Issues:

- Recall that you signed the refreshed Duavata Partnership in July with Minister Ditoka when he visited Auckland.
- Highlight how pleased New Zealand was to have Foreign Minister Ditoka attend the Future of Investment and Trade Partnership Ministerial Meeting and meet with Minister McClay. s6(a)
- Note that recent engagements have highlighted how much work we have ahead of us to achieve our goal of NZ$2 billion in two-way trade by 2030. New Zealand looks forward to stepping up this work under the Duavata Partnership.
- s6(a)
- s6(b)(i)
- s6(a)

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French Polynesia: President Moetai Brotherson



Moetai Brotherson was elected President of the Government of French Polynesia in May 2023 for a term of five years. He speaks English.

In April 2026, a major split occurred in the pro-independence Tāvini Huira'atira Party, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

The break became formal in July when Brotherson left Tavini to become leader of the breakaway group A Fano Tia ("Stay the Course"). s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

You last met Brotherson on 8 March 2026 during your visit to Papeete while returning from the Latin American mission.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Note our warm bilateral relationship and enhanced development cooperation and recall our visit to Tahiti in March.
- **Development:** We are offering for French Polynesia, with eligibility from 2026 for up to three Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship Programme postgraduate scholarships, and vocational training, work placements and English language training for young people.
- **Domestic politics:** Enquire about the state of French Polynesian politics s6(a)
- **Pacific region:** Exchange views on Pacific regional challenges, and how to develop resilient, adaptable communities, including through greater regional integration.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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New Caledonia: Member of Government for Mines and Energy, Alcide Ponga



Alcide Ponga ["pon-ga"] was appointed member of Government responsible for Mines and Energy on 5 August 2026 following long-overdue provincial (territorial) elections in June 2026. He is the immediate former President of the Government of New Caledonia (January 2025 until 31 July 2026). s9(2)(g)(i)

You last met Ponga (when he was President) in Nouméa during your May 2025 visit to New Caledonia.

Checklist of Issues:

- **New Caledonia Election:** Welcome the election of the 19th Government of New Caledonia and congratulate Ponga on his appointment as Minister of Mines and Energy.
- **Prospects for stability**: Note New Zealand has a strong interest in enduring peace and stability in New Caledonia. s6(a)
- Invite Ponga's views on the new government's early priorities in addressing the territory's economic and social challenges.
- **NZ support:** Reiterate New Zealand's desire to be a helpful and constructive partner for New Caledonia and France, s6(a)
- In particular, we are developing follow up initiatives to the successful July 2025 New Caledonia Study Tour to New Zealand focussed on economic development and the Māori economy.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Niue: Prime Minister Dalton Tagelagi



Hon Dalton Tagelagi [*pron.* tah-ng-eh-lah-gee] was re-elected Prime Minister in May 2026. He won his village seat by one vote (111:110) and the Prime Minister vote 11:9. He is a Member of Niue's 19th General Assembly, representing Niue's most populous village constituency of Alofi South. Prime Minister Tagelagi was first elected Premier in June 2020 and re-elected with the title of Prime Minister in April 2023.

You last met Prime Minister Tagelagi in Auckland, July 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Realm Leaders Meeting:** Seek Prime Minister Tagelagi's reflections on the inaugural Realm Leaders' meeting on 28 August.
- **War memorial event:** Note the special ceremony taking place this week 26 August in Niue to hand over service memorial headstones for 39 Niue veterans who served in WWI.
- s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)
- s6(a)
- **PACER Plus**: Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Solomon Islands: Prime Minister Matthew Wale



Hon Matthew Wale ["Wa-leh"] has been Prime Minister of Solomon Islands since 15 May 2026. As Opposition Leader, he was a prominent and at times outspoken critic of successive governments. Wale was educated at Christ's College in Christchurch and studied accounting and finance at Victoria University of Wellington. He is fond of Rugby Union and played while at Christ's.

You last met Wale during his visit to New Zealand in June this year.

Checklist of Issues:

- s6(a)

- **Labour Mobility:** Note that officials are engaging directly with Solomon Islands' Labour Mobility Unit to progress enhanced capacity support, which could include a Country Liaison Officer in New Zealand to support growth in Solomon Islands RSE worker numbers.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

- **Regional Security proposal:** Seek an update on Wale's proposed regional security treaty. s6(a)

- s6(a)

- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Tonga: Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua



Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua [*pron. Faka-fah-nu-ah*] is the Prime Minister of Tonga and, Minister of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications; Minister of Police, Fire, Emergency Services and Prisons; and Acting Finance Minister.

You last met Lord Fakafanua in June 2026 in Samoa during Independence Day celebrations.

Checklist of Issues:

- **PIF Troika:** Acknowledge Tonga's leadership in the Pacific Islands Forum as part of the current Troika.
- **Tongan visits:** Convey that we look forward to hosting the Crown Prince on 1 October. We would also welcome a visit by Lord Fakafanua and His Majesty King Tupou VI at a mutually convenient time.
- s6(a)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i) Note that we were pleased to host the Lord Privy Seal in Wellington in August. s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii)
- **PACER Plus**: Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Vanuatu: Minister of Climate Change Hon Ralph Regenvanu

Time and date: *Breakfast, 8.15am Tuesday 1 September*



Hon Ralph Regenvanu [*"Ray-gen-vah-noo"*] is Vanuatu's Minister for Climate Change Adaptation, Energy, Environment, Geo-Hazards and Disaster Management. s6(a)

s9(2)(a) Minister Regenvanu is Vanuatu's Head of Delegation as Prime Minister Jotham Napat has competing domestic priorities. You last met Regenvanu at the UN General Assembly in September 2025.

Checklist of Issues:

- **PIF:** Seek Vanuatu's priorities for the Forum, noting the importance New Zealand places on Vanuatu's contributions as a leader in the climate space.
- **RESSET Renewable Project:** Note the recent groundbreaking of the RESSET project in Tanna contributing to Vanuatu's ambition to eliminate the use of fossil fuels.
- s6(a)
- **Melanesian cooperation:** Note Vanuatu's efforts to deepen Melanesian cooperation, with the recent signature of MOUs with Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Seek views on how shared issues are being addressed through regional architecture.
- s6(a)
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat: Secretary-General Baron Waqa



Baron Waqa [WONG-gah] became Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in June 2024. A former President of Nauru (2013-2019), he brings deep political experience to the role. As Secretary-General, he leads the Forum Secretariat and serves as Permanent Chair of the CROP agencies.

You both attended the Forum Foreign Ministers in August, but your last meeting with Mr. Waqa was during a layover in Fiji in January 2026.

Checklist of Issues

- s6(a)

- **PIF Troika:** Comment New Zealand looks forward to working more closely with the Secretary General when we join the Troika in September, and as host of the 56th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting.
- **NZ Hosting:** Note New Zealand's hosting will be guided by the Forum's central purpose - strengthening regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security.
- Ask the Secretary-General about the Secretariat's plans for preparing a Hosting Arrangement for New Zealand's consideration.

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Tokelau [Associate Member]: Ulu Alapati Tavite



Alapati Tavite [*pron.* Ahla-paati Ta-vitee] became Ulu o Tokelau for the second time in February 2026. This is a national titular head role that rotates annually between Tokelau's three Faipule and includes the foreign affairs, justice, and public service portfolios. As Faipule (Chief Representative) of Nukunonu Atoll, he also carries the national ministerial portfolios for finance and health.

You last met the Ulu in June 2026 in Apia at Samoa's 64th Anniversary of Independence.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Tokelau Centenary:** Congratulate the Ulu on Tokelau successfully hosting commemorations for the centenary of New Zealand's administration of Tokelau in July this year (attended by the Administrator of Tokelau and PM La'aulialemalietoa Leuatea Schmidt of Samoa).
- **Fisheries:** Note New Zealand remains very concerned about Tokelau's unfortunate removal from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Vessel Day Scheme and the extra budgetary pressures that this is creating. New Zealand remains committed to working alongside Tokelau to resolve this situation as soon as possible, which includes us writing a letter in support of their case.
- **Transport:** Acknowledge current challenges facing Tokelau regarding transport frequency, and with fuel supply vulnerability. New Zealand officials are working closely with Tokelauan officials on options to build Tokelau's fuel reserves and storage capacity as well as the commissioning of a renewable energy solar power system to cut diesel dependence.

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MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
RT HON WINSTON PETERS
OFFICALS' BRIEF

NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM LEADERS MEETING

30 August – 1 September

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Overview and Objectives

Date: 29 August – 1 September 2026

Attendees: As Forum Chair, Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr. will host most events throughout the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Week. Most Pacific Leaders are confirmed to be attending.

Attire: Pacific Formal (bula shirt provided).

Event briefs: You are invited to multiple events across the week, including: the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting Opening Ceremony; the Ocean Partnership Roundtable and Reception, the Dialogue with the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific; the Dialogue with Civil Society and Private Sector; the Dialogue with Associate Members, Country Observers, and Observer Organisations and the Dialogue with Forum Development Partners; and the Polynesian Leaders Group Meeting. Briefs for these events are provided below.

Priority bilaterals: Across the week there will be time for bilaterals and pull-asides, including with Forum Dialogue Partners. s6(a)

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Key objectives: We suggest three key objectives across the week to build on progress made at the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting:

- **Demonstrating New Zealand's deep commitment to Pacific regionalism in the lead-up to New Zealand's hosting of the Forum.** The Forum is one of New Zealand's most important commitments and a cornerstone of our engagement in the Pacific. As policy planning begins for our hosting, it is important to demonstrate we are listening to Pacific priorities (including those of the smallest Members) and investing in our hosting responsibilities and Troika membership.
- **Encouraging greater partner investment in the region.** As Leaders finalise the Forum's Partnerships Mechanism, we need to encourage increased Partner engagement and investment in the region. s6(a)
- **Promoting greater regional connectivity and integration.** New Zealand's hosting of the 56th Forum will be guided by the Forum's central purpose – strengthening regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security. NZDF's "milk-run" is a tangible demonstration of New Zealand's commitment to regional connectivity. This week also presents a chance to encourage greater uptake of PACER Plus, particularly for the US Compact of Association States and Fiji.

Pacific Resilience Facility Pledges

Country	Pledged Currency	US$ (approx.)
Australia	AUD100 m	69,353,277
Canada	CAD7.5 m	5,485,192 (paid in)
China	USD0.5 m	500,000
France	EUR2 m	2,278,922
Germany	EUR5 m	5,697,304
Ireland	EUR3 m	3,418,519 (paid in)
Japan	JPY417 m	2,731,525 (paid in)
Marshall Islands	USD1 m	1,000,000
Naoero (Nauru)	AUD1 m	693,533 (partially paid in)
Netherlands	EUR1 m	1,139,483
New Zealand	NZD20 m	11,522,382
Saudia Arabia[1]	USD50 m	50,000,000
Solomon Islands	USD1 m	1,000,000
Taiwan	USD3 m	3,000,000
United States	USD20 m	20,000,000
Total		**177,820,137**
Target Capitalisation		500,000,000
Remaining		322,179,863

Country	Pledged Currency	US$ (approx.)
Australia	AUD100 m	69,353,277

s6(b)(ii)

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Other Contributions

- Austria (€1 million) and Portugal's (€1 million) contributions to the PRF are being used for on-granting for early demonstration projects, not a contribution to the PRF capital base.

Expected Pledges

- The United Kingdom is expected to announce a £9-10m contribution at the 2026 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting. We understand the first tranche will be used for early

demonstration projects, not a contribution to the capitalisation, which requires more due diligence particularly related to PRF governance.

- Italy is seeking final approvals for a €500,000 contribution to the Pacific Resilience Facility to announce before the Forum.
- Norway's response to the PIF Partnership Mechanism survey shows Norway intends to announce a contribution of NOK 10 million (approximately NZ$1.8 million) to the PRF. Norway's foreign ministry have advised that their agency for development cooperation (Norad) is in contact with the PRF Secretariat and are hopeful to announce this contribution at PIFLM 55.
- s6(b)(i)

Active Requests

- s6(b)(i)
- s6(b)(i)
- s6(b)(i)

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EVENT BRIEFS

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Ocean Partnership Roundtable

Time and date: 2:00-6:00pm, Sunday, 30 August

Objectives

- To demonstrate New Zealand's interest in a priority matter for President Whipps.

Guests

- All meeting delegates, Special Guests and Invited Guests s6(a)

Agenda

- 2.00pm: Opening remarks and perspectives from Pacific Leaders and strategic partners
- 3.00pm Roundtable 1: Pacific-Led Priorities and Implementation Opportunities (speaking notes provided below).

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10 minutes' drive from the Palau Pacific Resort hotel)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Media

- New Zealand and local media will be present.

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Speaking notes

Roundtable One: Pacific-Led Priorities and Implementation Opportunities (3.00pm - 4.15pm)

- Thank you chair and delegates we're pleased to speak briefly on behalf of New Zealand in this discussion on mobilising finance and partnerships in the Pacific.
- The Pacific's ocean is one of our region's greatest assets. Realising its potential and protecting its values will require sustained investment and strong partnerships.
- In the Pacific, success will depend on attracting and retaining responsible and responsive investment. We need to build serious partnerships to ensure Pacific countries can realise the benefits of their ocean resources.
- New Zealand is a partner in a range of regional initiatives that aim to provide flexible an accessible finance to help build ocean and climate resilience in the region. We encourage our partners to invest in these Pacific-led solutions, which include the Pacific Resilience Facility, efforts led by our CROP partners, including the important work of the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, and SPC's Flagship programmes on ocean and climate.
- New Zealand is also a proud partner, and Executive Board member of the Global Fund for Coral Reefs. This initiative is providing access to finance for sustainable businesses and helping build the resilience of the region's critical coral reefs. We also encourage others to join us and support these efforts.

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<u>Roundtable Two</u> (if required): Mobilising Finance and Partnerships for a Sustainable Blue Pacific (4.30 - 5.45pm)

Investment in building climate resilience through the Pacific Community

- New Zealand values its longstanding partnerships within the region and is working alongside our partners to help maximise the value of our investments. A recent success story includes the impact of our investment into SPC's Flagship programme on climate, helping Pacific countries build resilience to the changing climate. New Zealand's investment of NZ$30 million helped mobilise over NZ$142 million in its first two years alone.
- This figure now sits at over NZ$330 million, more than 10 times our original investment. This shows how we can work together with our valued partners to deliver on key priorities for the Pacific.
- We also invested in SPC's 'Climate Science for Ensuring Pacific Tuna Access' Program. Tuna remains one of the Pacific's most valuable economic resources, yet science shows stocks are shifting in search of cooler waters. SPC's regional work is helping us better understand these changes, to plan for and strengthen economic and climate resilience. It is also a good example of how a strategic investment can attract further support, in this case, from the Green Climate Fund, helping this important work continue and expand across the region.

Investment in the Global Fund for Coral Reefs

- New Zealand is a proud partner, and Executive Board member of the Global Fund for Coral Reefs.

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- Through making a single investment [US$10 million] in this pooled fund – alongside development partners, philanthropies, and private investors – we are contributing to building resilience of coral reefs globally. In the Pacific, this includes work in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Micronesia and Solomon Islands.
- This week, GFCR Executives are here in Palau to review the progress of this programme including how it will benefit the critical coral reefs of this area.
- New Zealand consistently encourages our partners to join us in supporting these important efforts. Our collaborative efforts are what is needed to help achieve Pacific goals for a healthy and resilient Blue Pacific.

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Ocean Reception hosted by H.E. Whipps Jr.

Time and date: 6:00pm, Sunday, 30 August

Runsheet

- 6:20pm: Arrival of Leaders
- 6:30pm Welcome and Prayer
- 6:40pm Opening Remarks by Secretary General
- 6:50pm Remarks by Solomon Islands Prime Minister Wale
- 7:00pm Remarks by Minister Peters
- 7:10pm Remarks by Bezos Earth Fund representative
- 7:20pm Closing remarks by Palau President Whipps

Objectives

- To interact with Forum Leaders and show support for President Whipps as host and Forum Chair.
- To highlight New Zealand's leading role in creating successful Pacific Ocean climate initiatives and partnerships.

Guests

- All meeting delegates, Special Guests and Invited Guests s6(a)

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Palau Pacific Resort
- Dress code: Pacific Formal
- You have been asked to give short remarks at the start of the event, alongside President Whipps, Prime Minister Rabuka, Forum Secretary General Waqa and a representative of the Bezos Earth Fund (which has made a significant commitment to the Niue Ocean Wide Partnership).

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Speaking notes

- President Whipps, Heads of Government, Honourable Ministers, Secretary General, Pacific Ocean Commissioner, representatives from across the Pacific, and distinguished guests.
- It is a pleasure to join you this evening to celebrate Pacific Ocean leadership, and discuss what's possible for our region, the vast Blue Pacific Continent we call home.
- We are proud to support the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner and its leadership in bringing Pacific countries together. Commissioner, we value the serious contribution you and your office make to this important work.

Backing Pacific Priorities

- The importance New Zealand places on our region is no secret.
- In our travels to all Pacific Islands Forum countries over the last three years, one message has come through time and time again: the importance of the ocean as a crucial part in our economies and a cornerstone of our livelihoods.
- New Zealand is committed to working alongside you to strengthen climate and ocean resilience, support sustainable livelihoods and ensure the Pacific realises the benefits from our ocean.
- New Zealand has strongly supported the Pacific Resilience Facility through a $20 million pledge. We are vigorously knocking on doors and seeking PRF pledges across the globe from other regions, particularly in Europe, Middle East and North America. As the saying goes – 'if you don't ask, you'll never know,' and we'll continue with these efforts to reach the fund's US$500 million target.

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- Once fully capitalised, the PRF will provide accessible grants to help our region build climate and disaster resilience at the community level. We need more contributions from our Partners to ensure it can deliver for the Pacific.
- Outside of formal mechanisms like the PRF, New Zealand is focussed on supporting greater public and private sector investment into the Pacific. Our Blue Pacific Ocean is at the heart of all economic activity in our countries – just like it was when our ancestors departed the shores of Asia before the time of Christ. This is why New Zealand strongly support investment in port facilities and maritime trade and we look forward to discussing this important issue this week.
- We strongly believe that our Ocean's fisheries is a bounty that can managed in a sustainable way to ensure the prosperity of future generations. This is why we have invested in SPC's 'Climate Science for Ensuring Pacific Tuna Access' Program. Tuna remains one of the Pacific's most valuable economic resources, yet science shows stocks are shifting in search to cooler waters.
- SPC's programme is helping us better understand these changes, and to strengthen our economic and climate resilience. It is also a good example of how a strategic investment can attract further support. By bringing in other Partners we have helped this important work to expand across the region.
- We are supporting marine spatial planning efforts across the region, working with countries to balance economic opportunity, climate resilience and the sustainable management of marine resources.
- Through this work, we were pleased to support Palau to develop its first Sustainable Ocean Policy, launched earlier

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this month. It is an important milestone for Palau and demonstrates Pacific leadership delivering solutions that work for its people and resources they depend on.

Conclusion

- In the Pacific, success will depend on attracting and retaining responsible and responsive investment.
- In 2027, New Zealand will have the privilege of hosting the Pacific Islands Forum. Our discussions today, on the future of our ocean, will help shape our preparations for that role.
- We will continue working closely with you as we prepare for that responsibility so that when New Zealand takes the chair, we will do so with a clear understanding of the Pacific's priorities, interests, and ambitions.
- Thank you.

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Polynesia Leaders Group Lunch Meeting

Time and date: 12.45-1.50pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- To understand the priorities of Polynesian Leaders and discuss key issues in advance of the wider suite of Forum meetings later in the week.
- To seek the views of Polynesian Leaders on priority areas of focus for New Zealand's hosting and chairing of the Forum from next year.

Participants

- Forum Leaders from Polynesian countries, including the Ulu of Tokelau. s9(2)(f)(iv)
- You will be accompanied by Bernadette Cavanagh (Deputy Secretary, Pacific Development Group)

Agenda

- s9(2)(f)(iv)

Meeting logistics

- This meeting will be held over lunch
- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Speaking notes

- Not required.

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Leaders Dialogue with the President of the Asia Development Bank

Time and date: 2:00-3:00pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- Encourage the ADB President to continue to prioritise Bank resources in the Pacific, by acknowledging and advocating for the unique challenges faced by remote Small Island Developing States in the region.

Guests

- All Forum Members, CROP agencies and the Asia Development Bank

Agenda

- Opening remarks from Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Remarks from ADB President
- Remarks from Forum Leaders
- Reflections from ADB President
- Closing remarks from Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Biographies of Participants



Masato Kanda *[Muss-a-toe Kun-duh]* is the President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He assumed office on 24 February 2025, and New Zealand has supported his re-election to a second term in 2026. Under his leadership, ADB has significantly scaled up its support to the Asia-Pacific region, while securing the first amendment to the Bank's Charter in its 60-year history, enabling an increase in annual financing capacity by 50 percent. He previously served as a Special Advisor to Japan's Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

He can be addressed as "President Kanda".

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Speaking notes

- We welcome the significant growth in the ADB's Pacific portfolio over recent years (growing from US$0.55 billion in 2009 to US$4 billion in 2026), and its commitment to following a "differentiated approach" in supporting Small Island Developing States.
- By some metrics, ADB sits alongside New Zealand as the second-equal largest contributor of development finance in the Pacific (11% respectively of the 2024 total, with Australia accounting for 37%). The ADB has become an increasingly important player in helping the region address its infrastructure deficit, while also offering more support in the health and education sectors.
- We appreciate the ADB's responsiveness to the effects of the conflict in the Middle East, by adjusting existing emergency response mechanisms to allow Developing Member Countries (including in the Pacific) to address the price shock. This is an area of work where New Zealand and the ADB (along with Australia and the World Bank) continue to coordinate closely, including looking at how we can support the region's energy transition in the medium term.
- We wish Mr Kanda well for his election to a second term as President in November.*

* ***Note*** *that the election is uncontested and the Minister of Finance committed New Zealand's support by letter in July 2026.*

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Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders

Time and date: 3:00-4:00pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- To understand the priorities of Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders (PICL) members.

Guests

- This event will be hosted by US Deputy Secretary of State Landau and include PICL members. Australia and New Zealand are invited as observers.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Background

- The PICL's 20 members overlap with but are not the same as the Pacific Islands Forum, and do not include New Zealand or Australia. PICL members are: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Hawai'i State, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Republic of Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
- The PICL is touted as being "a forum for Pacific Island leaders to address shared issues, learn from each other's experiences, and develop common approaches to policy".

s6(a)

- Palau President Whipps is known to be a strong supporter of the PICL. Similarly, while the US is not a member in its own right, the PICL has traditionally provided an opportunity for Pacific leaders to directly engage US political leaders. In 2021, the 11th PICL Meeting included addresses by then-secretary of state, Anthony Blinken, and then-presidential special envoy for climate change, John Kerry.

Speaking notes

- Not required.

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55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting Opening Ceremony

Time and date: 6:30-8:30pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- Demonstrate New Zealand's respect for traditional protocols as an important part of relationships and dialogue.
- To interact informally with Forum Leaders and other VIP guests.

Guests

- We expect most Forum Leaders to attend.
- We also expect good attendance from Forum Dialogue Partners.
- The event is open to the public.
- s6(a)

Agenda

- An event programme will be provided to Leaders as they arrive.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Palau National Gymnasium (approx. 15-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Media

- New Zealand and local media will be present.

Speaking notes

- Not required.

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Leaders Dialogue with the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific

Time and date: 8:00am-9:30am, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- To ensure CROP agencies are working together in support of the priorities of Forum Leaders, including the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. Discussions may touch on Review of Regional Architecture implementation.

Participants

- Forum Leaders, Associate Members, Forum Country Observers and Heads of CROP agencies (bios provided on the next page).

Agenda

- Opening remarks by Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Thematic Area 1: Policy Development and AI Governance
- Thematic Area 2: Implementation in Renewable Energy Transition and Security
- Thematic Area 3: Advocacy on COP 31 Pacific Partnerships Priorities
- Thematic Area 4: Regional Review of Architecture
- Closing remarks by Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- Media will be present at the opening formalities.

Background

- The Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) is a group of nine inter-governmental regional agencies that provide specialist services and advice to advance the Pacific's development objectives.
- This is an annual dialogue between the heads of the five main regional agencies (collectively known as the 'Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific' or CROP) and Forum Leaders, the first of which occurred at the 2016 Pacific Islands Forum in Pohnpei. The discussion will focus on the role of CROP agencies in delivering on Forum Leaders' priorities.
- s9(2)(f)(iv)

Our overarching aim under the RRA is to ensure our CROP agencies are working together to deliver against the priorities of our Leaders.

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Biographies of Participants

Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)



Mr. Noan David Pakop was appointed to the role of Director-General of the FFA by Ministers and commenced his duties in November 2024. Mr Pakop previously served as Special Advisor for the National Fisheries Authority of Papua New Guinea. New Zealand successfully hosted the annual fisheries ministerial in Wellington in July 2026. You met Mr Pakop during the welcome dinner at Parliament.

The Pacific Community (SPC)



Dr. Paula Vivili is the Director-General of the SPC. Serving in the role since 10th November 2025. Dr Vivili previously served as SPC's Deputy Director General, Science and Capability for five years and before that as the Director of the Public Health Division at the Pacific Community. You last met in July 2026 and gifted Dr Vivili a photograph of his graduation from Otago University – he reciprocated with a photograph of the first South Pacific Commission meeting in 1948.

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)



Mr. Sefanaia Nawadra is the Director General of the SPREP. A Fijian national, he has led SPREP since 2022 after holding senior roles, the United Nations Environment Programme, Conservation International, and the Fiji Government. Mr Nawadra holds qualifications in Environmental Engineering and Environmental Management.

The University of the South Pacific (USP)



Hon Siosiua (Josh) Tuitalukua Tupou Utoikamanu is the Pro Chancellor (PC) of USP, a position he has held since 2024. Hon Utoikamanu has 40 years of experience in public financial management, public sector reform, and policy development across the Pacific region. He served as Minister of Finance in the Kingdom of Tonga from 2001-2008.

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Speaking notes [if required]

- *[Digital and AI Governance]* New Zealand approaches the accelerating pace of digital transformation across the Pacific with clear-eyed realism. The opportunities are significant, but so are the risks. That is why we welcome the endorsement of the Pacific Digital and AI Technology Principles, which place resilience, transparency, and Pacific values at the centre of our region's approach to digital technologies and artificial intelligence.
- *[Renewable Energy Transition and Energy Security]* The Regional Fuel Security Assessment has shown there is no silver bullet to improve fuel security or affordability in the region. The best path towards economic and energy resilience is to reduce demand for imported fuels primarily through increased renewable generation and secondarily through improved energy efficiency.
- *[COP31 Pacific Partnership Priorities]* New Zealand welcomes Australia's close partnering with Pacific Islands Forum members ahead of the Pacific Pre-COP, and Fiji and Tuvalu's hosting.
- *[Review of Regional Architecture]* We want to see efficient and effective regional agencies that work together.

s9(2)(f)(iv)

We need clear reporting to ensure that the Roadmap actually delivers the shifts we need.

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Leaders Dialogue with Civil Society and Private Sector

Time and date: 10:00am-11:00am, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- To acknowledge the important role that civil society organisations play in delivering development impact through the International Development Cooperation programme.
- To emphasise the range of ways New Zealand works with, and supports, the Pacific private sector to build their skills, connections and competitive advantage.

Guests

- Forum Members, Associate Members, Forum Country Observers, and CROP Agencies, alongside key Civil Society and Private Sector Representatives.

Agenda

Civil Society segment

- Introductory remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Civil Society to give remarks
- Response by Forum Leaders
- Closing remarks

Private Sector segment

- Introductory remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Private sector representatives to give remarks
- Response by Forum Leaders
- Closing remarks

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- This event is open to all delegates, with media present at the opening formalities.

Background

- This session, with Civil Society and the Private Sector, is styled as "an opportunity for inclusive and constructive dialogue on pertinent regional issues" but is usually a series of prepared statements.

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Speaking notes [if required]

- New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to engage with Civil Society and private sector organisations. We recognise the significant role of NGOs in the Pacific region.
- Through their in-country civil society partners, New Zealand NGOs deliver development at a community level across the Pacific, providing insights on local and community level challenges and community-based solutions.
- New Zealand supports our NGOs to delivery development outcomes through the Partnering for Impact programme. Through the programme, at least 60% of funding is targeted for the Pacific.
- In 2025/26 financial year our Foreign Ministry provided around $54 million to New Zealand NGOs for their development work in the Pacific and South-Southeast Asia.
- New Zealand NGOs co-invested an additional $7.75 million in 2025/26 to support the work delivered through Partnering for Impact.
- New Zealand also recognises the role of the private sector in driving Pacific economic development.
- We invest across the region to support the growth and resilience of key industries and businesses.
- Our private sector development programs engage with Pacific agriculture and tourism sectors, and support key private sector enablers such as digital connectivity and access to finance.

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Leaders Dialogue with Associate Members and Observers

Time and date: 11:00am-12:00pm, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- To join other Forum Leaders in engaging with Associate Members and Observers.

Participants

- Associate Members: American Samoa, Guam, Tokelau, and Wallis and Futuna; Timor Leste is an Observer.
- Observer organisations: the UN, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

Agenda

- Remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Associate Members and Country Observers give remarks
- Observer Organisations give remarks
- Response by Forum Leaders
- Closing remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- Media will be present at the opening formalities.

Background

- Forum Leaders decided in 2004 to create a category of 'Associate Membership' of the Pacific Islands Forum to promote closer contacts with non-sovereign Pacific territories, including Tokelau. Any territory in the Pacific Islands region may submit a written request to the Forum Secretary General, for the consideration of Leaders.
- Associate Members are entitled to attend and speak at the Plenary Session of the Forum Leaders' Meeting and other Leaders' meetings. They are not entitled to attend the Leaders' Retreat or participate in decisions.

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Leaders Dialogue with Forum Dialogue Partners

Time and date: 1:00pm-2:00pm, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- Affirm the valuable role that partners play in the Pacific and reiterate New Zealand's view that fostering relationships with Dialogue Partners is a critical function of the Forum.
- Highlight our expectation that Partners will align their support with the region's priorities.

Participants

- Forum Dialogue Partners and Forum Leaders.

Agenda

- Openings remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Forum Dialogue Partners represented at Ministerial level give remarks
- Forum Leaders give remarks
- Closing remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- Present for opening formalities only.

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Speaking notes

- New Zealand welcomes the significant support to our region from our Dialogue Partners. Your support is critical if our region is to make progress. This is not flattery. Since 2008, our Partners have contributed over US$60.2bn of development support to our region.
- We want to continue working closely with you through a partnership mechanism that delivers benefits to both Forum Members and our Partners. We need structured, high-quality engagement with all our Partners, irrespective of status.
- This process must put the Forum in the driving seat. It is critical Partners respect our priorities and procedures. Partners must support our efforts to build Forum centrality by aligning with the 2050 Strategy.
- We also remind our Partners that we have declared our region an Ocean of Peace. And that the Treaty of Rarotonga establishes the South Pacific as a Nuclear Free Zone.
- The spirit of hospitality runs deep in our Pacific region, as does respect. We have seen this balance work for others, including through our own experience as a partner of ASEAN. New Zealand is committed to seeing it work here too.
- We look forward to concluding deliberations on the new mechanism for Dialogue Partners' engagement with the Forum this week and implementing the new modalities for engagement as hosts of the next Leaders' Meeting in Auckland.
- s6(b)(i)

  We welcome the US's commitment to deliver for the Pacific through its foreign assistance and acknowledge the scope of new initiatives the US has announced at the Pacific Islands Forum.

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Joint Announcement on Penrhyn Wharf project

Time and date: 2:10pm, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- Joint announcement by the Cook Islands, New Zealand and the United States that we will work together to deliver a major wharf upgrade on the island of Penrhyn in the northern Cook Islands

Guests

- US: Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau
- NZ: Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Cook Islands: Prime Minister Mark Brown

Agenda

- The US has proposed the Leaders sign a Statement of Intent at the event. Officials are working on a draft.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Media

- A joint press release is in development to be released by all three countries alongside this announcement.
- New Zealand, Pacific and US media are expected to attend the event.

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Speaking notes

- Prime Minister Brown, Deputy Secretary Landau, distinguished guests. It is an honour today we are very pleased in partnership with our Cook Island and American friends to announce our intention to deliver a major wharf upgrade project in Penrhyn in the northern Cook Islands, in partnership.
- New Zealand and the US will both provide funding for the project. New Zealand will contribute $17.5 million and lead the implementation of the project, working closely with the Cook Islands Government.
- This is great news for the people of Penrhyn and the Cook Islands.
- It is also a sign of just how close New Zealand's partnerships are with both the US and the Cook Islands.
- Upgrading the Penrhyn wharf has been a priority for the Cooks Islands for many years.
- The wharf upgrade will improve safety, security and connectivity across the Cook Islands' northern group. Penryhn is blessed with a strategic location in the Pacific and we strongly believe that the project will enhance the Cook Islands' integration into the global economy, particularly between North America and New Zealand and Australia.
- As well as helping local communities, it will boost efforts to combat transnational crime and illegal fishing in the region, which all of our countries have a stake in.
- This is a very welcome and significant investment by the US too. We welcome that commitment in our region and hope it can be a model for future collaborations between us.

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- We are all committed to a stable, prosperous and resilient region and this investment will support those goals.
- We look forward to working together to make this a success.

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BILATERALS AND PRIORITY PULL-ASIDES: FORUM MEMBERS

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Palau: Minister of State Gustav Aitaro, Palau

Time and date: TBC Lunch at Elilai Restaurant: 12pm, Sunday 30 August



Minister Aitaro [pron: *eye-tah-row*] has been Palau's Minister of State since September 2021. Aitaro was re-appointed in early 2025 s6(a)

Aitaro has a long career in diplomacy, having worked at the Ministry of State for two decades, including as Director (Secretary equivalent). He later served as the Special Assistant to the Office of the President on Foreign Matters. He is personable and a good friend of New Zealand.

You met in August in the margins of the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in Suva.

Checklist of Issues

Pacific

- Congratulate the Minister for Palau's hosting of PIFLM. New Zealand looks forward to working alongside Palau on the Troika.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- Endorse Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Naoero Agreement's (PNA's) Vessel Day Scheme.

Bilateral relationship

- Note the importance of President Whipps' visit to New Zealand in April, the first official visit by a Palauan President.
- Note New Zealand has since disbursed NZ$2.2 million as grant funding to support economic reform in Palau, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank.

(If raised) NZ Support to Palau hospital

- Note New Zealand's support of US efforts to assist Palau to build a new hospital. Note we are looking at ways in which we can contribute to the project as it progresses.

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Naoero ["NOW-ero"]: President David Adeang

Time and date: 3:15pm – 3:45pm, Tuesday 1 September



His Excellency David Adeang ["ah-dee-yung"] was re-elected as President following Nauru's October 2025 general election. Adeang has served as President since October 2023 and has been a Member of Parliament since 2001.

He has held several senior ministerial portfolios, including finance and justice, and is one of Nauru's most experienced political figures.

You last met in September 2025 in Port Moresby during PNG's 50th anniversary of independence.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Recall our visit in 2024 and our gratitude for President Adeang's hosting.
- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Camilla Solomon as Naoero's first High Commissioner to New Zealand in 2025, cross-accredited from Canberra.
- **Development:** Reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to supporting Naoero's long-term economic resilience. Highlight New Zealand's contribution of NZ$1 million annually (2019–2034) to the Nauru Intergenerational Trust Fund. As of June 2026, the Fund held assets of approximately AUD$479 million.
- **Trade:** Seek an update on Naoero's consideration of ratifying PACER Plus. What can New Zealand do to support this?
- **Tokelau fisheries:** Endorse Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Naoero Agreement's (PNA's) Vessel Day Scheme.
- s6(a)

Background:

1. s6(a)

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The Cook Islands: Prime Minister Mark Brown

Time and date: 10:30-11am, Tuesday 1 September



Preliminary results of the 12 August Cook Islands election show **Hon Mark Brown** is very likely to be re-elected as Prime Minister of the Cook Islands Government for the third time. After a post-election deal with three independent MPs from Mangaia, his Cook Islands Party is on track to win two thirds of the seats in Parliament.

Ministerial portfolios have not yet been confirmed. However, prior to the election, Brown held Ministerial responsibilities for Finance and Economic Management, Attorney General, Public Service Commission, Police, Seabed Minerals Authority, Tourism, Energy and Renewable Energy, Outer Island Special Projects, and Telecommunications.

You last met Prime Minister Brown on 1 April during your visit to Rarotonga for the signing of the Declaration on Defence and Security.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Cook Islands Election:** Congratulate Brown on his successful re-election as Prime Minister.
- **Relationship normalisation**: Welcome the normalisation of the relationship after a challenging period.
- Underscore New Zealand's efforts to deliver on the Declaration on Defence and Security, including to again hold NZDF Exercise Tropic Twilight in the Cook Islands – this time in Penrhyn (last year it was in Mauke).
- **Penrhyn Wharf:** Note our pleasure to be investing in Penrhyn Wharf in partnership with the Cook Islands and US, with New Zealand as implementing partner.
- s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Republic of the Marshall Islands: President Dr Hilda Heine

Time and date: 5-5.30pm, Monday 31 August



Her Excellency Dr Hilda Heine ["hi-nee"] was the first female President of RMI from 2016-2020 and was re-elected in 2024. s6(a) She has an extensive background in education, including as Minister of Education, President of the College of the Marshall Islands, and Pro-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific. She was the first Marshallese person to earn a doctorate.

You both attended PIFLM in Tonga in late August 2024, following your visit to RMI in earlier that month.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral**: Highlight New Zealand's support to the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) on climate-induced loss and damage, and through technical assistance to the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA) to strengthen resource management and combat illegal fishing. Emphasise New Zealand's commitment to continuing support in these areas.
- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Junior Aini as RMI's first Ambassador to New Zealand in April 2025, cross-accredited from Suva.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Climate:** Acknowledge the pre-eminent threat climate change poses for RMI. Note New Zealand is exploring ways to support RMI's climate adaptation and we're lobbying hard for external Pacific Resiliency Facility contributions. Seek President Heine's views on her priorities.

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Solomon Islands: Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Rick Houenipwela

Time and date: 11:45am – 12:15pm, Tuesday 1 September



Hon Rick Houenipwela *(Ho-en-ip-weller)*, commonly known as Rick Hou *(Ho)*, was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade in May 2026. A former Prime Minister (2017-19), he entered politics in 2010 following a distinguished career with the Central Bank of Solomon Islands which included serving as Governor, s6(a) He visited New Zealand as Prime Minister in 2018.

You both attend the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in August but last met formally with Hou when he accompanied Prime Minister Wale to New Zealand in early June.

Checklist of Issues

- **Rescue of NZ hikers:** Reiterate our thanks for the rescue of the two NZ hikers in Guadulcanal that we included in our letter of 4 August and we appreciated your response of 20 August.
- s6(a)
- **RSE**: Share that, s6(b)(i) New Zealand is now offering additional support for Solomon Islands' participation in the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme. This includes up to NZD 600,000 in grant funding to the Solomon Islands Labour Mobility Unit.
- **Regional security treaty proposal:** Express interest in Prime Minister Wale's proposal for a Forum regional security treaty, s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Tonga: Minister for His Majesty's Diplomatic Services, HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala

Time and date: 10.30am, Monday 31 August



Heir to the throne **HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala** [address as: "Your Royal Highness" and subsequently "sir"]. A small bow on meeting would be respectful. The Crown Prince is Minister for His Majesty's Diplomatic Services and Minister for His Majesty's Armed Forces.

You both attended the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in Suva, 7 August.

Checklist of Issues

- **Crown Prince Visit:** Welcome an official visit from the Crown Prince to New Zealand later this year and that we look forward to hosting him for lunch on 1 October.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i) Note we were pleased to host Lord Privy Seal Viliami Malolo in August. s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii)
- s6(a)
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)
- **PIF Troika:** Acknowledge Tonga's leadership to the Pacific Islands Forum as part of the current Troika.

Background:

2. s9(2)(b)(ii)

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Palau: President Surangel Whipps Jr

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



His Excellency Surangel Whipps Jr has been President of Palau since 2020. He was re-elected in 2024 for a second four-year term. Constitutionally, he will not be eligible to run for the Presidency again in the 2028 election. Whipps continues to hold the finance and education portfolios while his nominations are held up in the Senate. Prior to his Presidency, Whipps served two terms as a Senator in the Palau National Congress.

You last met when hosting President Whipps for lunch at Harbour Society in Auckland, during his visit in April this year.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Congratulate Palau for hosting the Pacific Islands Forum and note that you look forward to working alongside Palau on the Troika.
- Note the importance of President Whipps' visit to New Zealand in April, the first official visit by a Palauan President.
- Following the visit New Zealand disbursed NZ$2.2 million as grant funding to support economic reform in Palau, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank.
- **Tokelau Fisheries:** Endorse Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Naoero Agreement's (PNA's) Vessel Day Scheme.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Palau Hospital** s6(a)

  We will look closely at the US feasibility study when it is finalised, including on whether we can make a contribution to the development.
- s6(a)

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Papua New Guinea: Prime Minister James Marape

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Hon James Marape has been Prime Minister since 2019, after previously serving as Finance Minister. The son of a pastor, Marape is a devoted Seventh-day Adventist and a keen golfer.

You last met Prime Minister Marape in September 2025 for PNG's Independence Day.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Highlight the strong momentum in the bilateral relationship. Since your August 2025 visit to Port Moresby, we have advanced several key commitments, including expanding our small business programme into the Highlands, supporting PNG trade negotiators, strengthening defence cooperation and deepening policing ties with the RPNGC.
- **Bougainville:** Note New Zealand welcomed the Parties' (Papua New Guinea Government and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville) endorsement of the Melanesian Framework and Joint consultations Report on 5 August.
- **El Nino response:** Note New Zealand concern about the potential humanitarian impacts of a severe El Niño weather event. Note we are keen to discuss how partners can best support PNG's response efforts.
- s6(a)

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Tuvalu: Prime Minister Feleti Teo

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Hon Feleti Teo [*pron.* Fell-ety Te-oh] was unanimously selected as Prime Minister of Tuvalu on 26 February 2024. Teo spent the past 23 years in prominent positions in regional Pacific institutions, including as the Deputy Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum (2007-2013), and the Executive Director of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (2014-2023).

You last met during Teo's Guest of Government visit to New Zealand in March 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Pre-COP:** Note New Zealand looks forward to supporting Tuvalu to host a successful Pre-COP special leaders' component. New Zealand has committed a C-130 aircraft to assist with pre-COP logistics.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Tokelau fisheries:** Note New Zealand's deep concern about Tokelau's exclusion from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement Vessel Day scheme (PNA VDS).
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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The Federated States of Micronesia: President Wesley Simina

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



His Excellency Wesley Simina [pron: *see-me-nah*] is a long-standing figure in FSM politics and was sworn in as President in May 2023. Climate change is a key focus for Simina's foreign policy agenda. Simina's domestic policy is focused on national unity – given FSM is made up of four geographically and culturally distinct states. Prior to becoming President, Simina served as Speaker of the FSM Congress from 2015 to 2023 and as Governor of Chuuk State from 2005 to 2011.

You both attended PIFLM in Tonga in late August 2024, following your visit to FSM earlier that month.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Drinking water programme:** Highlight New Zealand's support for early childhood development and safe drinking water in FSM in partnership with UNICEF. New Zealand also provides technical assistance to National Oceanic Resource Management Authority to strengthen marine resource management and combat illegal fishing.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- [*if raised: climate* change] Acknowledge the threat climate change poses for FSM. Note New Zealand is exploring ways to support FSM's climate adaptation. Seek President Simina's views on his priorities.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Samoa: Deputy Prime Minister Afioga Mulipola Anarosa Ale-Molio'o

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Hon. Afioga Mulipola [Moo-lee-poh-lah] **Anarosa Ale-Molio'o** took on the role of Deputy Prime Minister in March 2026, in addition to the Minister of Finance portfolio. Mulipola made history in 2021 as Samoa's first female Minister of Finance under former-PM Fiame's Government.

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

and is one of two returning Cabinet Ministers after the FAST Party's election victory in 2025. She is an auditor and accountant by profession.

You last met Mulipola while in Apia during the Independence Day Anniversary in June 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- Acknowledge the importance of the PIF and highlight Samoa as a founding member of the PIF plays an important role as a voice that upholds democracy, good governance, and a peaceful region.
- **Hosting 2027:** New Zealand looks forward to warmly welcoming Samoa and the rest of the PIF membership to New Zealand for our hosting of the PIF Leaders' Meeting in 2027, consistent with our longstanding cooperation in advancing Pacific regionalism.
- s6(a)
- s6(b)(i)

  Acknowledge Samoa's vulnerability to higher fuel prices which will flow through the economy and the risk of supply shocks down the track. New Zealand will continue to work closely with Samoa if they need technical or other support to help them get through the crisis.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

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Pacific Ocean Commissioner: Dr Filimon Manoni

Time and date: Pull aside during Evening Ocean Reception, 6:00pm, Sunday 30 August.



Dr Filimon Manoni was appointed the Pacific Ocean Commissioner in 2023. He previously served as the Deputy Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (2020 – 2023) and Legal Adviser to the Secretariat (2018 – 2020), where he advised members on issues such as ocean governance, nuclear issues, and climate change. Dr Manoni has previously served as the Attorney General for the Republic of the Marshall Islands and as a Legal Adviser to the Forum Fisheries Agency. You previously met in January 2026.

Checklist of issues:

- **OPOC's Regional Role** – Acknowledge the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner's (OPOC) important role in representing and advocating for Pacific interests in global ocean forums, facilitating development of regional perspectives on key issues (such as Deep-Sea Minerals and Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions (BBNJ)), and supporting countries to implement global and regional agreements.
- **PIF 2027** – Reiterate New Zealand's commitment to working closely with Pacific partners in preparation for hosting the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in 2027. The Commissioner has indicated interest in how New Zealand will take forward ocean priorities in PIF 2027.
- *[If raised **Commissioner Reappointment**]* – Acknowledge Dr Manoni has formally requested to be reappointed as Commissioner for a second three-year term. [Leaders will discuss Dr Manoni's reappointment s9(2)(f)(iv)
- *[If raised **OPOC Funding**]* – Note that discussions on funding and the future governance and institutional alignment of OPOC remain underway, and we look forward to continued engagement on this matter.

Background:

1. Support for OPOC is via a co-funding arrangement between New Zealand and Australia, with the current phase of support ending 30 June 2027. This phase includes a 1-year extension to complete the OPOC Strategic Plan, which will inform the next phase of support. s9(2)(f)(iv)

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BILATERALS AND PRIORITY PULL-ASIDES: FORUM DIALOGUE PARTNERS

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Chile: Minister of Foreign Affairs: Francisco Pérez Mackenna

Time and date: TBC: 11-11.30pm, Sunday 30 August



Minister Francisco Pérez Mackenna [Frahn-SIS-coh PEH-rez mah-KEH-nah] was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in March 2026. He is a prominent Chilean businessman who served as the CEO of one of Latin America's biggest holding companies (Quiñenco) for almost two decades. He is married with eight children, and likes race cars, hunting, and tennis. Minister Pérez Mackenna has professed an affinity for New Zealand, having visited several times in a personal capacity. You have not met previously but had an introductory phone call in May 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Reaffirm the value we attach to our relationship with Chile, which is one of most import in Latin America. Reflect on your visit to Chile in March.
- **PIF:** Acknowledge Chile's connections to the Pacific and welcome its decision to attend PIF at ministerial level. You may want to share your perspectives on visiting Rapa Nui/Easter Island.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Countering illegal drugs:** Emphasise the seriousness we attach to working together to disrupt the flow of drugs to the Pacific. This is demonstrated by our establishment of new Police Counsellor and Customs Counsellor positions, both based in Bogota with a regional remit.
- *[If raised, partnerships mechanism]*: Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.
- s6(a)

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Japan: State Minister of Foreign Affairs Iwao HORII

Time and date: TBC 6:00pm, Sunday 30 August



Mr Iwao HORII *[pron. Hor-ree-ee]* has been a State Minister for Foreign Affairs since September 2023. He was first elected to the Upper House in 2013 and has previously served as Deputy Secretary-General of the LDP and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Horii is a respected politician and a friend of New Zealand. He enjoys travelling, rugby, war-time history, and eating gourmet food.

You met Horii in February 2026 when he visited New Zealand. He has travelled in the Pacific s6(a)

Checklist of Issues

- **Visit:** Acknowledge your recent visit to Tokyo, which made clear the strategic alignment between our countries, including in relation to the Pacific.
- **Bilateral:** Note our desire to uplift our bilateral relationship, as we celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations in 2027.
- Welcome Japan's continued support for Pacific priorities, including its important development assistance to the region.
- s6(a)

[If raised, partnerships mechanism]

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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United Kingdom: Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Indo-Pacific, Baroness Rosie Winterton

Time and date: 11-11.30am, Monday 31 August



The Rt Hon Baroness Winterton was appointed in July 2026. Baroness Winterton's responsibilities also include small island developing states (SIDS). A senior Labour politician, she served as MP for Doncaster Central from 1997 to 2024, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons from 2017 to 2024 and has held ministerial roles across health, transport, work and pensions, local government and justice. Most recently, she served as the UK's Trade Envoy to Bangladesh. Baroness Winterton has not visited New Zealand or the Pacific Islands region in any official capacity.

This is your first meeting with Baroness Winterton.

Checklist of Issues:

- Congratulate Baroness Winterton on her appointment as UK Under-Secretary of State for Indo-Pacific and ask what her top priorities will be in her new role. Note we appreciated her predecessor Sima Malhotra's focus on our region.
- **Strategic challenges:** Encourage the UK to stay engaged in the Pacific and share perspectives on geostrategic developments in the region.
- **Development:** Highlight the chance for the UK to make a meaningful contribution to the Pacific s6(a) by focussing on areas where it has expertise; and on advocacy for Pacific countries and SIDS issues in multilateral institutions.
- **PRF contribution:** Encourage the UK to support regional priorities by contributing to the Pacific Resilience Facility.
- **Maritime security:** Acknowledge the UK contribution to Pacific maritime security through the deployment of offshore patrol vessels in coordination with New Zealand and Fiji.
- **COP:** Note New Zealand looks forward to joining the UK at Pre-COP to showcase the progress of the US$100 million TIDES blended finance fund for renewable energy in the Pacific, of which NZ$40 million is funded by NZ (NZ$16 million) and the UK (NZ$24 million).

*[If raised, **PIF partnerships mechanism**]*

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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France: Minister Delegate for Francophonie, International Partnerships and French Nationals Abroad Éléonore Caroit

Time and date: 9.30-10am, Tuesday 1 September



Éléonore Caroit *[pron: ay-lay-oh-NOR ka-RWAH]* has served in her current ministerial portfolio since October 2025. A French-Dominican lawyer specialising in international arbitration, she practised in Paris, New York and Geneva before entering politics. Elected to the French National Assembly in 2022 to represent French citizens in Latin America and the Caribbean, she served as Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs Committee and as a board member of the French Development Agency (AFD).

Checklist of issues

- **France and Pacific:** We appreciate our longstanding cooperation with France in the Pacific. For example, maritime surveillance and disaster response under the FRANZ programme, and police cooperation against transnational, serious and organised crime.
- **Regional security:** Note our strong interest in deepening the Forum's regional security architecture. We will work to ensure that proposals are appropriate for all Members, in line with their respective arrangements and competencies.
- **New Caledonia/French Polynesia:** Reiterate New Zealand's desire to be a helpful and constructive partner s6(a) Note New Zealand's ongoing interest in practical support to New Caledonia, including developing follow up initiatives to the successful July 2025 New Caledonia Study Tour to New Zealand focussed on economic development and the Māori economy.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- *[If raised, **partnerships mechanism**]* Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region. We cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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Background:

RESSET

1. In November 2024 you approved the Renewable Energy Solar and Storage on Efate and Tanna (RESSET) project, s6(a)

2. s6(a)

3. RESSET is the Vanuatu Government's top priority renewable energy project and a major component of its National Energy Road Map to achieve near 100 percent renewable electricity generation by 2030. s6(a)

4. RESSET will deliver solar photovoltaic and battery energy storage systems on Efate (where the capital Port Vila is located) and Tanna in Vanuatu, reducing annual fuel imports by US$1.4 million (NZ$2.25 million) and making tangible New Zealand's commitment to Vanuatu as a collaborative, responsive donor of preference. Construction and commissioning of both the Tanna and Efate sites is due to be completed in mid-to-late 2027.

5. The Tanna component of New Zealand's flagship Vanuatu renewable energy project broke ground on 7 July 2026 at a ceremony attended by Prime Minister Napat, Acting Deputy Prime Minister Johnson, and Climate Minister Regenvanu. s6(a)

6. s6(a)

7. s6(a)

s6(a)

2. s6(a)

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Singapore: Minister of Foreign Affairs Vivian Balakrishnan

Time and date: Informal lunch, 12pm, Tuesday 1 September



Dr Vivian Balakrishnan has been Singapore's Foreign Minister since 2015, and a Member of Parliament since 2001. s6(a)

Minister Balakrishnan last attended PIF in 2023 as part of Singapore's first engagement with the Forum as a Dialogue Partner.

You last met with Dr Balakrishnan during your visit to Singapore in July.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Singapore engagement in the region:** Welcome Singapore's continued engagement in the Pacific. In the context of increasing geopolitical competition in the Indo-Pacific, engagement with s6(a) partners who advocate for small island states, like Singapore, is becoming increasingly important.
- Emphasise New Zealand's desire to work more closely with Singapore on Pacific issues s6(a)
- s6(b)(i)

*[If raised, **PIF partnerships mechanism**]*

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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United States: Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau

Time and date: 6:00pm, Tuesday 1 September



Hon Christopher Landau commenced his role as Deputy Secretary of State in March 2025.

Secretary Rubio has delegated the Pacific portfolio to Landau s9(2)(g)(i)
After PIF, he will travel on to the Federated States of Micronesia and the Solomon Islands, having recently hosted Prime Minister Wale in Washington. s6(a)

You last with Landau in April 2026 in Washington. The discussion focused on coordination with the US in the Pacific and the impact of the war in Iran on Pacific economies.

Checklist of Issues:

- **US/PIF:** Congratulate Landau on the impressive scope of new initiatives the US will announce at PIF and welcome US Ambassador Novelly's prioritisation of travel to Samoa and the Cook Islands early in his term.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Penrhyn project:** Welcome the positive outcome on the Penrhyn wharf project and the substantial US investment.
- s6(a)

[If raised, partnerships mechanism]

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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Germany: Parliamentary State Secretary of the Environment Ministry Bettina Hagedorn

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Bettina Hagedorn *[beh-TEE-nah HAH-geh-dorn]* is a senior German Social Democratic Party (SPD) politician and long-serving Member of the Bundestag, representing Schleswig-Holstein since 2002. She is an experienced politician particularly in the finance/budgetary space.

Since April 2026 she has served as Parliamentary State Secretary – akin to an Associate Minister - at Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. She has a strong personal interest in marine conservation and the protection of the Baltic Sea, which neighbours her electorate.

Address as State Secretary Hagedorn.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Germany and Pacific:** Welcome Germany's increased engagement with the Pacific, including the opening of an Embassy in Suva in 2023, formal diplomatic recognition of Niue in 2026, and pledged contribution to the Pacific Resilience Facility.
- Emphasise the importance of sustained and credible engagement with the Pacific. Note that Foreign Minister Wadephul and the Bundestag's Germany-Pacific Friendship Group visited the Pacific earlier this year.

*[If raised, **partnerships mechanism**]*

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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BIOGRAPHIES: FORUM MEMBERS AND TOKELAU

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Australia: Prime Minister Anthony Albanese



Hon Anthony Albanese was re-elected for a second three-year term on 3 May 2025, becoming the first Prime Minister since John Howard to lead his party to consecutive election victories. With such a resounding mandate, much of Albanese's first-term Cabinet remain in their roles. Albanese has been the leader of the Australian Labor Party since 2019 and the MP for the NSW division of Grayndler since 1996. He was born in Sydney and studied economics at the University of Sydney. He is married to Jodie Haydon, and has one son from his previous marriage.

Checklist of Issues:

- Reiterate New Zealand's interest in exploring joining the Ocean of Peace Alliance s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Fiji: Prime Minister, Sitiveni Rabuka



Hon Sitiveni Rabuka [*pron.* See-the-veh-knee Ram-boo-kah] became Fiji's Prime Minister for the second time in December 2022. PM Rabuka heads up the People's Alliance Party and leads a three-way Coalition Government. Fiji's next election is due by February 2027 (date yet to be set), with constitutional reform to be considered before then.

s9(2)(a)

s6(a)

Checklist of Issues:

- Recall that you signed the refreshed Duavata Partnership in July with Minister Ditoka when he visited Auckland.
- Highlight how pleased New Zealand was to have Foreign Minister Ditoka attend the Future of Investment and Trade Partnership Ministerial Meeting and meet with Minister McClay. s6(a)
- Note that recent engagements have highlighted how much work we have ahead of us to achieve our goal of NZ$2 billion in two-way trade by 2030. New Zealand looks forward to stepping up this work under the Duavata Partnership.
- s6(a)
- s6(b)(i)
- s6(a)

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French Polynesia: President Moetai Brotherson



Moetai Brotherson was elected President of the Government of French Polynesia in May 2023 for a term of five years. He speaks English.

In April 2026, a major split occurred in the pro-independence Tāvini Huira'atira Party, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) The break became formal in July when Brotherson left Tavini to become leader of the breakaway group A Fano Tia ("Stay the Course"). s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

You last met Brotherson on 8 March 2026 during your visit to Papeete while returning from the Latin American mission.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Note our warm bilateral relationship and enhanced development cooperation and recall our visit to Tahiti in March.
- **Development:** We are offering for French Polynesia, with eligibility from 2026 for up to three Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship Programme postgraduate scholarships, and vocational training, work placements and English language training for young people.
- **Domestic politics:** Enquire about the state of French Polynesian politics s6(a)
- **Pacific region:** Exchange views on Pacific regional challenges, and how to develop resilient, adaptable communities, including through greater regional integration.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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New Caledonia: Member of Government for Mines and Energy, Alcide Ponga



Alcide Ponga ["pon-ga"] was appointed member of Government responsible for Mines and Energy on 5 August 2026 following long-overdue provincial (territorial) elections in June 2026. He is the immediate former President of the Government of New Caledonia (January 2025 until 31 July 2026). s9(2)(g)(i)

You last met Ponga (when he was President) in Nouméa during your May 2025 visit to New Caledonia.

Checklist of Issues:

- **New Caledonia Election:** Welcome the election of the 19th Government of New Caledonia and congratulate Ponga on his appointment as Minister of Mines and Energy.
- **Prospects for stability**: Note New Zealand has a strong interest in enduring peace and stability in New Caledonia. s6(a)
- Invite Ponga's views on the new government's early priorities in addressing the territory's economic and social challenges.
- **NZ support:** Reiterate New Zealand's desire to be a helpful and constructive partner for New Caledonia and France, s6(a)
- In particular, we are developing follow up initiatives to the successful July 2025 New Caledonia Study Tour to New Zealand focussed on economic development and the Māori economy.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Niue: Prime Minister Dalton Tagelagi



Hon Dalton Tagelagi [*pron.* tah-ng-eh-lah-gee] was re-elected Prime Minister in May 2026. He won his village seat by one vote (111:110) and the Prime Minister vote 11:9. He is a Member of Niue's 19th General Assembly, representing Niue's most populous village constituency of Alofi South. Prime Minister Tagelagi was first elected Premier in June 2020 and re-elected with the title of Prime Minister in April 2023.

You last met Prime Minister Tagelagi in Auckland, July 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Realm Leaders Meeting:** Seek Prime Minister Tagelagi's reflections on the inaugural Realm Leaders' meeting on 28 August.
- **War memorial event:** Note the special ceremony taking place this week 26 August in Niue to hand over service memorial headstones for 39 Niue veterans who served in WWI.
- s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)
- s6(a)
- **PACER Plus**: Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Solomon Islands: Prime Minister Matthew Wale



Hon Matthew Wale ["Wa-leh"] has been Prime Minister of Solomon Islands since 15 May 2026. As Opposition Leader, he was a prominent and at times outspoken critic of successive governments. Wale was educated at Christ's College in Christchurch and studied accounting and finance at Victoria University of Wellington. He is fond of Rugby Union and played while at Christ's.

You last met Wale during his visit to New Zealand in June this year.

Checklist of Issues:

- s6(a)

- **Labour Mobility:** Note that officials are engaging directly with Solomon Islands' Labour Mobility Unit to progress enhanced capacity support, which could include a Country Liaison Officer in New Zealand to support growth in Solomon Islands RSE worker numbers.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

- **Regional Security proposal:** Seek an update on Wale's proposed regional security treaty. s6(a)

- s6(a)

- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Tonga: Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua



Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua [*pron. Faka-fah-nu-ah*] is the Prime Minister of Tonga and, Minister of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications; Minister of Police, Fire, Emergency Services and Prisons; and Acting Finance Minister.

You last met Lord Fakafanua in June 2026 in Samoa during Independence Day celebrations.

Checklist of Issues:

- **PIF Troika:** Acknowledge Tonga's leadership in the Pacific Islands Forum as part of the current Troika.
- **Tongan visits:** Convey that we look forward to hosting the Crown Prince on 1 October. We would also welcome a visit by Lord Fakafanua and His Majesty King Tupou VI at a mutually convenient time.
- s6(a)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i) Note that we were pleased to host the Lord Privy Seal in Wellington in August. s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii)
- **PACER Plus**: Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Vanuatu: Minister of Climate Change Hon Ralph Regenvanu



Hon Ralph Regenvanu [*"Ray-gen-vah-noo"*] is Vanuatu's Minister for Climate Change Adaptation, Energy, Environment, Geo-Hazards and Disaster Management. s6(a)

s9(2)(a) Minister Regenvanu is Vanuatu's Head of Delegation as Prime Minister Jotham Napat has competing domestic priorities. You last met Regenvanu at the UN General Assembly in September 2025.

Checklist of Issues:

- **PIF:** Seek Vanuatu's priorities for the Forum, noting the importance New Zealand places on Vanuatu's contributions as a leader in the climate space.
- **RESSET Renewable Project:** Note the recent groundbreaking of the RESSET project in Tanna contributing to Vanuatu's ambition to eliminate the use of fossil fuels.
- s6(a)
- **Melanesian cooperation:** Note Vanuatu's efforts to deepen Melanesian cooperation, with the recent signature of MOUs with Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Seek views on how shared issues are being addressed through regional architecture.
- s6(a)
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat: Secretary-General Baron Waqa



Baron Waqa [WONG-gah] became Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in June 2024. A former President of Nauru (2013-2019), he brings deep political experience to the role. As Secretary-General, he leads the Forum Secretariat and serves as Permanent Chair of the CROP agencies.

You both attended the Forum Foreign Ministers in August, but your last meeting with Mr. Waqa was during a layover in Fiji in January 2026.

Checklist of Issues

- s6(a)

- **PIF Troika:** Comment New Zealand looks forward to working more closely with the Secretary General when we join the Troika in September, and as host of the 56th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting.
- **NZ Hosting:** Note New Zealand's hosting will be guided by the Forum's central purpose - strengthening regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security.
- Ask the Secretary-General about the Secretariat's plans for preparing a Hosting Arrangement for New Zealand's consideration.

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Tokelau [Associate Member]: Ulu Alapati Tavite



Alapati Tavite [*pron.* Ahla-paati Ta-vitee] became Ulu o Tokelau for the second time in February 2026. This is a national titular head role that rotates annually between Tokelau's three Faipule and includes the foreign affairs, justice, and public service portfolios. As Faipule (Chief Representative) of Nukunonu Atoll, he also carries the national ministerial portfolios for finance and health.

You last met the Ulu in June 2026 in Apia at Samoa's 64th Anniversary of Independence.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Tokelau Centenary:** Congratulate the Ulu on Tokelau successfully hosting commemorations for the centenary of New Zealand's administration of Tokelau in July this year (attended by the Administrator of Tokelau and PM La'aulialemalietoa Leuatea Schmidt of Samoa).
- **Fisheries:** Note New Zealand remains very concerned about Tokelau's unfortunate removal from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Vessel Day Scheme and the extra budgetary pressures that this is creating. New Zealand remains committed to working alongside Tokelau to resolve this situation as soon as possible, which includes us writing a letter in support of their case.
- **Transport:** Acknowledge current challenges facing Tokelau regarding transport frequency, and with fuel supply vulnerability. New Zealand officials are working closely with Tokelauan officials on options to build Tokelau's fuel reserves and storage capacity as well as the commissioning of a renewable energy solar power system to cut diesel dependence.

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NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

OFFICIALS' BRIEF

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM LEADERS MEETING

30 August – 2 September



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Kiribati: President of the Republic of Kiribati, His Excellency Taneti Maamau 83
New Caledonia: Member of Government for Mines and Energy, Alcide Ponga 84
Niue: Prime Minister Dalton Tagelagi 85
Solomon Islands: Prime Minister Matthew Wale 86
Tonga: Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua 87
Vanuatu: Minister of Climate Change Hon Ralph Regenvanu 88
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat: Secretary-General Baron Waqa 89
Tokelau [Associate Member]: Ulu Alapati Tavite 90

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Overview and Objectives

Date: 30 August – 2 September 2026

Attendees: As Forum Chair, Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr. will host most events throughout the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Week. Most Pacific Leaders are confirmed to be attending.

Attire: Pacific Formal (bula shirt provided).

Key Objectives: we suggest three key objectives across the week to build on progress made at the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting:

- **Demonstrating New Zealand's deep commitment to Pacific regionalism in the lead up to New Zealand's hosting of the Forum:** the Forum is one of New Zealand's most important commitments and a cornerstone of our engagement in the Pacific. As policy planning begins for our hosting, it is important to demonstrate we are listening to Pacific priorities (including those of smallest Members) and investing in our hosting responsibilities and Troika membership.
- **Encouraging greater partner investment in the region:** as Leaders finalise the Forum's Partnerships Mechanism, we need to encourage increased Partner engagement and investment in the region. s6(a)
- **Promoting greater regional connectivity and integration:** New Zealand's hosting of the 56th Forum will be guided by the Forum's central purpose – strengthening regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security. NZDF's "milk-run" is a tangible demonstration of New Zealand's commitment to regional connectivity. This week also presents a chance to encourage greater uptake of PACER Plus, particularly for the US Compact of Association States and Fiji.

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Pacific Resilience Fund Pledges

Country	Pledged Currency	US$ (approx.)
Australia	AUD100 m	69,353,277
Canada	CAD7.5 m	5,485,192 (paid in)
China	USD0.5 m	500,000
France	EUR2 m	2,278,922
Germany	EUR5 m	5,697,304
Ireland	EUR3 m	3,418,519 (paid in)
Japan	JPY417 m	2,731,525 (paid in)
Marshall Islands	USD1 m	1,000,000
Naoero (Nauru)	AUD1 m	693,533 (partially paid in)
Netherlands	EUR1 m	1,139,483
New Zealand	NZD20 m	11,522,382
Saudia Arabia[1]	USD50 m	50,000,000
Solomon Islands	USD1 m	1,000,000
Taiwan	USD3 m	3,000,000
United States	USD20 m	20,000,000
Total		**177,820,137**
Target Capitalisation		500,000,000
Remaining		322,179,863

s6(b)(ii)

Other Contributions

- Austria (€1 million) and Portugal's (€1 million) contributions to the PRF are being used for on-granting for early demonstration projects, not a contribution to the PRF capital base.

Expected Pledges

- The United Kingdom is expected to announce a £9m contribution at the 2026 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting. We understand the first tranche will be used for early demonstration projects, not a contribution to the capitalisation, which requires more due diligence particularly related to PRF governance.
- Italy is seeking final approvals for a €500,000 contribution to the Pacific Resilience Facility to announce before the Forum.
- Norway's response to the PIF Partnership Mechanism survey shows Norway intends to announce a contribution of NOK 10 million (approximately NZ$1.8 million) to the PRF. Norway's foreign ministry have advised that their agency for development cooperation (Norad) is in contact with the PRF Secretariat and are hopeful to announce this contribution at PIFLM 55.
- s6(b)(i)

Active Requests

- s6(b)(i)

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- s6(b)(i)

- s6(b)(i)

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EVENT BRIEFS

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Ocean Partnership Roundtable

Time and date: 2:00-6:00pm, Sunday, 30 August

Objectives

- To demonstrate New Zealand's interest in a priority matter for President Whipps.

Guests

- All meeting delegates, Special Guests and Invited Guests s6(a)

Agenda

- Opening remarks and perspectives from Pacific Leaders and strategic partners
- Roundtable 1: Pacific-Led Priorities and Implementation Opportunities (speaking notes provided)
- Roundtable 2: Mobilising Finance and Partnerships for a Sustainable Blue Pacific

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10 minutes' drive from the Palau Pacific Resort hotel)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Media

- New Zealand and local media will be present.

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Speaking notes – Intervention for Roundtable One

- Thank you, President Whipps. The Pacific Ocean is our region's greatest asset. Capitalising on its potential requires sustained investment and strong partnerships.
- In the Pacific, success will depend on attracting and retaining responsible and responsive investment. We need to build serious partnerships to ensure Pacific countries can realise the benefits of their ocean resources.
- New Zealand is a partner in a range of regional initiatives that help build ocean and climate resilience in the region.
- We encourage our partners to invest in these Pacific-led solutions. And we have investment-ready programmes, such as the Pacific Resilience Facility, the important work of the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, and SPC's ocean and climate Flagship programmes.
- New Zealand is also a proud partner, and Executive Board member, of the Global Fund for Coral Reefs. This initiative is providing access to finance for sustainable businesses and helping build the resilience of the region's critical coral reefs. We encourage others to join us and support these efforts.
- We want our Partners to work with us on those issues that matter to our region. And to target your investments accordingly.

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Ocean Reception hosted by H.E. Whipps Jr.

Time and date: 6:00pm, Sunday, 30 August

Objectives

- To interact with Forum Leaders and show support for President Whipps as host and Forum Chair.
- To highlight New Zealand's leading role in creating successful Pacific Ocean climate initiatives and partnerships.

Guests

- All meeting delegates, Special Guests and Invited Guests s6(a)

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Palau Pacific Resort
- Dress code: Pacific Formal
- You have been asked to give short remarks at the start of the event, alongside President Whipps, Prime Minister Rabuka, Forum Secretary General Waqa and a representative of the Bezos Earth Fund (which has made a significant commitment to the Niue Ocean Wide Partnership).

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Speaking notes

- President Whipps, Heads of Government, Honourable Ministers, Secretary General, Pacific Ocean Commissioner, representatives from across the Pacific, and distinguished guests.
- It is a pleasure to join you this evening to celebrate Pacific Ocean leadership, and discuss what's possible for our region, the vast Blue Pacific Continent we call home.
- We are proud to support the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner and its leadership in bringing Pacific countries together. Commissioner, we value the serious contribution you and your office make to this important work.

Backing Pacific Priorities

- The importance New Zealand places on our region is no secret.
- In our travels to all Pacific Islands Forum countries over the last three years, one message has come through time and time again: the importance of the ocean as a crucial part in our economies and a cornerstone of our livelihoods.
- New Zealand is committed to working alongside you to strengthen climate and ocean resilience, support sustainable livelihoods and ensure the Pacific realises the benefits from our ocean.
- New Zealand has strongly supported the Pacific Resilience Facility through a $20 million pledge. We are vigorously knocking on doors and seeking PRF pledges across the globe from other regions, particularly in Europe, Middle East and North America. As the saying goes – 'if you don't ask,

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you'll never know,' and we'll continue with these efforts to reach the fund's US$500 million target.

- Once fully capitalised, the PRF will provide accessible grants to help our region build climate and disaster resilience at the community level. We need more contributions from our Partners to ensure it can deliver for the Pacific.
- Outside of formal mechanisms like the PRF, New Zealand is focussed on supporting greater public and private sector investment into the Pacific. Our Blue Pacific Ocean is at the heart of all economic activity in our countries – just like it was when our ancestors departed the shores of Asia before the time of Christ. This is why New Zealand strongly support investment in port facilities and maritime trade and we look forward to discussing this important issue this week.
- We strongly believe that our Ocean's fisheries is a bounty that can managed in a sustainable way to ensure the prosperity of future generations. This is why we have invested in SPC's 'Climate Science for Ensuring Pacific Tuna Access' Program. Tuna remains one of the Pacific's most valuable economic resources, yet science shows stocks are shifting in search to cooler waters.
- SPC's programme is helping us better understand these changes, and to strengthen our economic and climate resilience. It is also a good example of how a strategic investment can attract further support. By bringing in other Partners we have helped this important work to expand across the region.
- We are supporting marine spatial planning efforts across the region, working with countries to balance economic

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opportunity, climate resilience and the sustainable management of marine resources.

- Through this work, we were pleased to support Palau to develop its first Sustainable Ocean Policy, launched earlier this month. It is an important milestone for Palau and demonstrates Pacific leadership delivering solutions that work for its people and resources they depend on.

Conclusion

- In the Pacific, success will depend on attracting and retaining responsible and responsive investment.
- In 2027, New Zealand will have the privilege of hosting the Pacific Islands Forum. Our discussions today, on the future of our ocean, will help shape our preparations for that role.
- We will continue working closely with you as we prepare for that responsibility so that when New Zealand takes the chair, we will do so with a clear understanding of the Pacific's priorities, interests, and ambitions.
- Thank you.

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Polynesia Leaders Group Lunch Meeting

Time and date: 12.45-1.50pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- To understand the priorities of Polynesian Leaders and discuss key issues in advance of the wider suite of Forum meetings later in the week.
- To seek the views of Polynesian Leaders on priority areas of focus for New Zealand's hosting and chairing of the Forum from next year.

Participants

- Forum Leaders from Polynesian countries, including the Ulu of Tokelau. New Zealand is technically an "observer" in the Group, s9(2)(f)(iv)

Agenda

- We understand the meeting will discuss the Polynesia Leaders Group Charter.

Meeting logistics

- This meeting will be held over lunch
- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Speaking notes

- Not required.

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Leaders Dialogue with the President of the Asia Development Bank

Time and date: 2:00-3:00pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- Encourage the ADB President to continue to prioritise Bank resources in the Pacific, by acknowledging and advocating for the unique challenges faced by remote Small Island Developing States in the region.

Guests

- All Forum Members, CROP agencies and the Asia Development Bank

Agenda

- Opening remarks from Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Remarks from ADB President
- Remarks from Forum Leaders
- Reflections from ADB President
- Closing remarks from Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Biographies of Participants



Masato Kanda *[Muss-a-toe Kun-duh]* is the President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He assumed office on 24 February 2025, and New Zealand has supported his re-election to a second term in 2026. Under his leadership, ADB has significantly scaled up its support to the Asia-Pacific region, while securing the first amendment to the Bank's Charter in its 60-year history, enabling an increase in annual financing capacity by 50 percent. He previously served as a Special Advisor to Japan's Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

He can be addressed as "President Kanda".

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Speaking notes

- We welcome the significant growth in the ADB's Pacific portfolio over recent years (growing from US$0.55 billion in 2009 to US$4 billion in 2026), and its commitment to following a "differentiated approach" in supporting Small Island Developing States.
- By some metrics, ADB sits alongside New Zealand as the second-equal largest contributor of development finance in the Pacific (11% respectively of the 2024 total, with Australia accounting for 37%). The ADB has become an increasingly important player in helping the region address its infrastructure deficit, while also offering more support in the health and education sectors.
- We appreciate the ADB's responsiveness to the effects of the conflict in the Middle East, by adjusting existing emergency response mechanisms to allow Developing Member Countries (including in the Pacific) to address the price shock. This is an area of work where New Zealand and the ADB (along with Australia and the World Bank) continue to coordinate closely, including looking at how we can support the region's energy transition in the medium term.
- We wish Mr Kanda well for his election to a second term as President in November.*

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* ***Note*** *that the election is uncontested and the Minister of Finance committed New Zealand's support by letter in July 2026.*

Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders

Time and date: 3:00-4:00pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- To understand the priorities of Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders (PICL) members.

Guests

- This event will be hosted by US Deputy Secretary of State Landau and include PICL members. Australia and New Zealand are invited as observers.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx. 10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Background

- The PICL's 20 members overlap with but are not the same as the Pacific Island Forum, and do not include New Zealand or Australia. PICL members are: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Hawai'i State, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Republic of Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
- The PICL is touted as being "a forum for Pacific Island leaders to address shared issues, learn from each other's experiences, and develop common approaches to policy". s6(a)
- Palau President Whipps is known to be a strong supporter of the PICL. Similarly, while the US is not a member in its own right, the PICL has traditionally provided an opportunity for Pacific leaders to directly engage US political leaders. In 2021, the 11th PICL Meeting included addresses by then-secretary of state, Anthony Blinken, and then-presidential special envoy for climate change, John Kerry.

Speaking notes

- Not required.

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55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting Opening Ceremony

Time and date: 6:30-8:30pm, Monday, 31 August

Objectives

- Demonstrate New Zealand's respect for traditional protocols as an important part of relationships and dialogue.
- To interact informally with Forum Leaders and other VIP guests.

Guests

- We expect most Forum Leaders to attend.
- We also expect good attendance from Forum Dialogue Partners.
- The event is open to the public.
- s6(a)

Agenda

- An event programme will be provided to Leaders as they arrive.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Palau National Gymnasium (approx. 15-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Media

- New Zealand and local media will be present.

Speaking notes

- Not required.

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Leaders Dialogue with the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific

Time and date: 8:00am-9:30am, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- To ensure CROP agencies are working together in support of the priorities of Forum Leaders, including the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. Discussions may touch on Review of Regional Architecture implementation.

Participants

- Forum Leaders, Associate Members, Forum Country Observers and Heads of CROP agencies (bios provided on the next page).

Agenda

- Opening remarks by Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Thematic Area 1: Policy Development and AI Governance
- Thematic Area 2: Implementation in Renewable Energy Transition and Security
- Thematic Area 3: Advocacy on COP 31 Pacific Partnerships Priorities
- Thematic Area 4: Regional Review of Architecture
- Closing remarks by Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- Media will be present at the opening formalities.

Background

- The Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) is a group of nine inter-governmental regional agencies that provide specialist services and advice to advance the Pacific's development objectives.
- This is an annual dialogue between the heads of the five main regional agencies (collectively known as the 'Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific' or CROP) and Forum Leaders, the first of which occurred at the 2016 Pacific Islands Forum in Pohnpei. The discussion will focus on the role of CROP agencies in delivering on Forum Leaders' priorities.
- s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv)

Our overarching aim under the RRA is to ensure our CROP agencies are working together to deliver against the priorities of our Leaders.

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Biographies of Participants

Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)



Mr. Noan David Pakop was appointed to the role of Director-General of the FFA by Ministers and commenced his duties in November 2024. Mr Pakop previously served as Special Advisor for the National Fisheries Authority of Papua New Guinea. New Zealand successfully hosted the annual fisheries ministerial in Wellington in July 2026. You met Mr Pakop during the welcome dinner at Parliament.

The Pacific Community (SPC)



Dr. Paula Vivili is the Director-General of the SPC. Serving in the role since 10th November 2025. Dr Vivili previously served as SPC's Deputy Director General, Science and Capability for five years and before that as the Director of the Public Health Division at the Pacific Community. You last met in July 2026 and gifted Dr Vivili a photograph of his graduation from Otago University – he reciprocated with a photograph of the first South Pacific Commission meeting in 1948.

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)



Mr. Sefanaia Nawadra is the Director General of the SPREP. A Fijian national, he has led SPREP since 2022 after holding senior roles, the United Nations Environment Programme, Conservation International, and the Fiji Government. Mr Nawadra holds qualifications in Environmental Engineering and Environmental Management.

The University of the South Pacific (USP)



Hon Siosiua (Josh) Tuitalukua Tupou Utoikamanu is the Pro Chancellor (PC) of USP, a position he has held since 2024. Hon Utoikamanu has 40 years of experience in public financial management, public sector reform, and policy development across the Pacific region. He served as Minister of Finance in the Kingdom of Tonga from 2001-2008.

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Speaking notes [if required]

- *[Digital and AI Governance]* New Zealand approaches the accelerating pace of digital transformation across the Pacific with clear-eyed realism. The opportunities are significant, but so are the risks. That is why we welcome the endorsement of the Pacific Digital and AI Technology Principles, which place resilience, transparency, and Pacific values at the centre of our region's approach to digital technologies and artificial intelligence.
- *[Renewable Energy Transition and Energy Security]* The Regional Fuel Security Assessment has shown there is no silver bullet to improve fuel security or affordability in the region. The best path towards economic and energy resilience is to reduce demand for imported fuels primarily through increased renewable generation and secondarily through improved energy efficiency.
- *[COP31 Pacific Partnership Priorities]* New Zealand welcomes Australia's close partnering with Pacific Islands Forum members ahead of the Pacific Pre-COP, and Fiji and Tuvalu's hosting.
- *[Review of Regional Architecture]* We want to see efficient and effective regional agencies that work together.

s9(2)(f)(iv)

We need clear reporting to ensure that the Roadmap actually delivers the shifts we need.

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Leaders Dialogue with Civil Society and Private Sector

Time and date: 10:00am-11:00am, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- To acknowledge the important role that civil society organisations play in delivering development impact through the International Development Cooperation programme.
- To emphasise the range of ways New Zealand works with, and supports, the Pacific private sector to build their skills, connections and competitive advantage.

Guests

- Forum Members, Associate Members, Forum Country Observers, and CROP Agencies, alongside key Civil Society and Private Sector Representatives. s9(2)(a)

Agenda

Civil Society segment

- Introductory remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Civil Society to give remarks
- Response by Forum Leaders
- Closing remarks

Private Sector segment

- Introductory remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Private sector representatives to give remarks
- Response by Forum Leaders
- Closing remarks

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- This event is open to all delegates, with media present at the opening formalities.

Background

- This session, with Civil Society and the Private Sector, is styled as "an opportunity for inclusive and constructive dialogue on pertinent regional issues" but is usually a series of prepared statements.

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Speaking notes [if required]

- New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to engage with Civil Society and private sector organisations. We recognise the significant role of NGOs in the Pacific region. Through their in-country civil society partners, New Zealand NGOs deliver development at a community level across the Pacific, providing insights on local and community level challenges and community-based solutions.
- New Zealand supports our NGOs to delivery development outcomes through the Partnering for Impact programme. Through the programme, at least 60% of funding is targeted for the Pacific. In 2025/26 financial year our Foreign Ministry provided around $54 million to New Zealand NGOs for their development work in the Pacific and South-Southeast Asia. New Zealand NGOs co-invested an additional $7.75 million in 2025/26 to support the work delivered through Partnering for Impact.
- New Zealand also recognises the role of the private sector in driving Pacific economic development. We invest across the region to support the growth and resilience of key industries and businesses. Our private sector development programs engage with Pacific agriculture and tourism sectors, and support key private sector enablers such as digital connectivity and access to finance.

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Leaders Dialogue with Associate Members and Observers

Time and date: 11:00am-12:00pm, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- To join other Forum Leaders in engaging with Associate Members and Observers.

Participants

- Associate Members: American Samoa, Guam, Tokelau, and Wallis and Futuna; Timor Leste is an Observer.
- Observer organisations: the UN, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

Agenda

- Remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Associate Members and Country Observers give remarks
- Observer Organisations give remarks
- Response by Forum Leaders
- Closing remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- Media will be present at the opening formalities.

Background

- Forum Leaders decided in 2004 to create a category of 'Associate Membership' of the Pacific Islands Forum to promote closer contacts with non-sovereign Pacific territories, including Tokelau. Any territory in the Pacific Islands region may submit a written request to the Forum Secretary General, for the consideration of Leaders.
- Associate Members are entitled to attend and speak at the Plenary Session of the Forum Leaders' Meeting and other Leaders' meetings. They are not entitled to attend the Leaders' Retreat or participate in decisions.

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Speaking notes [if required]

- New Zealand welcomes the contribution of Associate Members and Observers to the region, including Tokelau. We see real value in their participation in regional discussions and at Forum meetings, where they can complement Pacific-led processes and reinforce PIF centrality.

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Leaders Dialogue with Forum Dialogue Partners

Time and date: 1:00pm-2:00pm, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- Affirm the valuable role that partners play in the Pacific and reiterate New Zealand's view that fostering relationships with Dialogue Partners is a critical function of the Forum.
- Highlight our expectation that Partners will align their support with the region's priorities.

Participants

- Forum Dialogue Partners and Forum Leaders.

Agenda

- Openings remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.
- Forum Dialogue Parnters represented at Ministerial level give remarks
- Forum Leaders give remarks
- Closing remarks by the Forum Chair, H.E. Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)

Media

- Present for opening formalities only.

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Speaking notes

- New Zealand welcomes the significant support to our region from our Dialogue Partners. Your support is critical if our region is to make progress. This is not flattery. Since 2008, our Partners have contributed over US$60.2bn of development support to our region.
- We want to continue working closely with you through a partnership mechanism that delivers benefits to both Forum Members and our Partners. We need structured, high-quality engagement with all our Partners, irrespective of status.
- This process must put the Forum in the driving seat. It is critical Partners respect our priorities and procedures. Partners must support our efforts to build Forum centrality by aligning with the 2050 Strategy. We also remind our Partners that we have declared our region an Ocean of Peace. And that the Treaty of Rarotonga establishes the South Pacific as a Nuclear Free Zone.
- The spirit of hospitality runs deep in our Pacific region, as does respect. We have seen this balance work for others, including through our own experience as a partner of ASEAN. New Zealand is committed to seeing it work here too.
- We look forward to concluding deliberations on the new mechanism for Dialogue Partners' engagement with the Forum this week and implementing the new modalities for engagement as hosts of the next Leaders' Meeting in Auckland.
- *[If US has announced its intention to provide economic support for the Pacific via the ADB]* We welcome the US's commitment to deliver for the Pacific through its foreign assistance and acknowledge the scope of new initiatives the US has announced at the Pacific Islands Forum.

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Joint Announcement on Penrhyn Wharf project

Time and date: TBC: 2:00pm, Tuesday, 1 September

Objectives

- Joint announcement by the Cook Islands, New Zealand and the United States that we will work together to deliver a major wharf upgrade on the island of Penrhyn in the northern Cook Islands

Guests

- US: Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau
- NZ: Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Cook Islands: Prime Minister Mark Brown

Agenda

- The US has proposed the Leaders sign a Statement of Intent at the event. Officials are working on a draft.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Ngarachamayong Cultural Center (approx.10-minute drive from the Palau Pacific Resort)
- Dress code: Pacific Formal

Media

- A joint press release is in development to be released by all three countries alongside this announcement.
- New Zealand, Pacific and US media are expected to attend the event.

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Speaking notes

- Prime Minister Brown, Deputy Secretary Landau, distinguished guests. It is an honour today we are very pleased in partnership with our Cook Island and American friends to announce our intention to deliver a major wharf upgrade project in Penrhyn in the northern Cook Islands, in partnership.
- New Zealand and the US will both provide funding for the project. New Zealand will contribute $17.5 million and lead the implementation of the project, working closely with the Cook Islands Government.
- This is great news for the people of Penrhyn and the Cook Islands.
- It is also a sign of just how close New Zealand's partnerships are with both the US and the Cook Islands.
- Upgrading the Penrhyn wharf has been a priority for the Cooks Islands for many years.
- The wharf upgrade will improve safety, security and connectivity across the Cook Islands' northern group. Penryhn is blessed with a strategic location in the Pacific and we strongly believe that the project will enhance the Cook Islands' integration in the global economy, particularly between North America and New Zealand and Australia.
- As well as helping local communities, it will boost efforts to combat transnational crime and illegal fishing in the region, which all of our countries have a stake in.
- This is a very welcome and significant investment by the UFS too. We welcome that commitment in our region and hope it can be a model for future collaborations between us.
- We are all committed to a stable, prosperous and resilient region and this investment will support those goals.
- We look forward to working together to make this a success.

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LEADERS PLENARY: 9.00am – 3.30pm, Wednesday 2 September

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Agenda

1. **Opening and Adoption of Agenda** (9:00am – 9:20am)

   The Chair will call the meeting to order and opening formalities will be observed.

2. **Regional and Strategic Landscape Timetable** (9:20am – 10:00am)

   To consider the evolving regional and strategic landscape, including emerging issues that may hinder ongoing efforts to strengthen regionalism and the achievement of the Leaders vision for 2050.

MORNING TEA (10:00am – 10:30am)

3. **Political Leadership and Regionalism** (10:30am – 11:00am)

   To consider the progress on the implementation of the 2050 Strategy as well as the ongoing work to strengthen how the region can strengthen its international engagement and advocacy as a region. Discussions will also consider the Report of the Regional Response Mechanism that was established following the trigger of the Biketawa Declaration as well as the SG's Report on the Treaty of Rarotonga and related developments.

4. **Peace and Security** (11:00am – 11:30am)

   To consider and provide guidance on the progress of key regional initiatives including: the Peace and Security Action Plan, the *Waqa Moana* proposal to address transnational crime and drugs, the Regional Peace and Security Governance Mechanism and the integrated Regional Security Response Mechanism.

5. **Resources and Economic Development** (11:30am – 12:00pm)

   To discuss the outcomes of the sectoral ministerial meetings on opportunities for strengthened cross-sectoral collaboration and regional economic integration on key regional initiatives and priorities, including the Pacific Resilience Facility, fisheries development and the Kava Declaration.

6. **People-Centred Development** (12:30pm – 1:00pm)

   To endorse the refreshed Pacific Framework on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and consider key updates on gender, heath, education and early childhood development.

LUNCH (1:00pm – 2:00pm)

7. **Climate Change and Disasters** (2:00pm – 2:30pm)

   To endorse the Leaders Declaration on Climate Change, including the Leaders Pact on Gender and Climate and consider the progress of preparations for COP 31, the Pre-COP 31 meetings to be hosted in the Pacific region, as well as the guidance provided by Climate Change Ministers on these matters.

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8. **Ocean and Environment** (2:30pm – 3:00pm)

   To endorse the draft Leaders Statement of Oceans and consider key updated on ocean-related priorities.

9. **Technology and Connectivity** (3:00pm – 3:30pm)

   To endorse the Pacific Digital and Artificial Intelligence Technology Principles and consider key updates in ICT development and regional aviation.

10. **Any Other Matters**

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AGENDA ITEMS

The following briefs are for items on the formal meeting agenda.

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Agenda item 2: Regional and Strategic Landscape (9:20am)

Handling Advice

s6(a)

- Warm Pacific greetings to our Chair, His Excellency President Whipps, to our Honourable Leaders, and to our Secretary General.
- Let us begin by extending our congratulations to President Milakulo Tukumuli and Prime Minister Mark Brown on your successful elections.
- As we have observed before, the Pacific Islands region is a profoundly democratic one.
- In an increasingly contested world, our shared commitment to democratic values is one of our greatest strengths and our greatest responsibilities.
- The Pacific family is strongest when the aspirations of its people are reflected in the decisions of their Leaders. It is through dialogue, respect and consent that we as a region will chart our shared future.
- This extends also to political representation. The strongest democracies draw on the talents and experience of all their people.
- New Zealand welcomes the ambition for increased women's political representation. We were pleased to host Pacific Women Parliamentarians in Wellington in July to exchange perspectives, strengthen regional ties, and support women's leadership in public life.
- New Zealand also supports a coordinated regional approach to increasing Pacific representation on international bodies. We commend Palau and Samoa for your elections to the Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and to Kiribati for your election to the Commission on the Status of Women.
- We were delighted that Forum Foreign Ministers endorsed Dr Penelope Ridings candidacy for re-election the International Law Commission for the term 2028 to 2032.
- As an expert in international law, a former High Commissioner to Samoa, and with over 40 years of experience in Pacific issues, Dr Ridings is well positioned to ensure the Commission progresses international law in a way which recognises Pacific interests.

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Agenda item 3: Political Leadership and Regionalism (10:30am)

Handling Advice

s6(a)

- New Zealand remains an engaged member of the CROP Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues in the Pacific. It is important that this Taskforce continues to progress work to deliver on our repeated requests as Leaders to address the impact of Pacific nuclear testing.
- New Zealand also supports work on to progress implementation of the provisions on victim assistance and environmental remediation in the context of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). We note the TPNW Review Conference will be held later this year in New York and hope it can progress decisions on these issues.

New Zealand's Position

2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

- New Zealand strongly supports the 2050 Strategy as the region's collective vision for the future. We welcome the focus on regional integration and the strategic opportunities it presents to bind our region more closely together.

Forum Dialogue Partnership Mechanism ReformS(

- New Zealand's position to date has been to advocate for improvements to how the Forum engages with its Partners. This includes making decisions on streaming/tiering to uphold the credibility of the Forum and its processes s6(a)
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- s6(a)

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- s6(a)

International Engagement and Advocacy

- In a world where the multilateral system and rules-based order on which our region depends are under strain, collective advocacy is essential to protecting Pacific priorities and amplifying voices.
- New Zealand welcomes progress on the Regional Mechanism for the Selection and Appointment of Regional Candidatures to International Bodies. s6(a)
- Forum Foreign Ministers endorsed Dr. Penelope Riding's candidacy for re-election to the International Law Commission for the term 2028-2032 during the Foreign Ministers Meeting in Suva, 7 August.
- New Zealand supports the intent of the 2050 International Engagement and Advocacy Strategy (2050 IEAS) as a unifying and coherent framework to consolidate and streamline ongoing engagement, advocacy and partnership initiatives being developed concurrently through Forum processes. The 2050 IEAS will be put to Leaders in 2027 in New Zealand.

Nuclear issues

- New Zealand strongly supports efforts to progress tackling historical nuclear legacy issues in the Pacific, created by nuclear testing by France, UK and US.
- New Zealand does this in several ways – through the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues in the Pacific, through our membership of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and relevant international resolutions, for instance in the UN General Assembly and the World Health Assembly.

New Caledonia

- New Zealand's consistent position is that New Caledonia's institutional future cannot be resolved without France. New Zealand continues to reiterate the importance of dialogue among all political representatives in New Caledonia to achieve enduring peace and stability.

Papua

- New Zealand's consistent policy is that Papua is the sovereign territory of the Republic of Indonesia.
- New Zealand raises human rights concerns with Indonesia bilaterally where relevant.

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- In the 2025 PIF Leaders' Communique - the most recent with language on Papua - Leaders reaffirmed recognition of Indonesia's sovereignty over Papua. s6(a)

Bougainville

- New Zealand supports a mutually agreed post-referendum process that upholds the Bougainville Peace Agreement and the stability and peace it has enabled.

Background

Forum Dialogue Partner reform

1. s6(a)

2. s6(a)

3. s6(a)

International Engagement and Advocacy

4. Despite growing Pacific leadership on global priorities, Pacific Island countries remain significantly under-represented in international bodies limiting the region's ability to influence global norms and policy decisions that directly affect Pacific peoples. The Regional Mechanism for the Selection and Appointment of Regional Candidatures to International Bodies, endorsed by Leaders, addresses this gap through a coordinated regional approach to international candidatures. Members have agreed officials should recommend candidatures to Foreign Ministers for endorsement.

5. In 2025, Forum Leaders also recognised that growing geopolitical competition in the Pacific was leading to fragmented, ad-hoc and sector-specific advocacy, diluting the region's collective influence. As such, Leaders endorsed the development of the 2050 IEAS to replace the 2018 Forum International Engagement and Advocacy Strategy and provide a single, forward-looking framework that unifies how the Pacific engages internationally.

6. The 2050 IEAS will consolidate existing and emerging regional initiatives that require advocacy and engagement, such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion on Climate Change, the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF), and Pacific COP31. It will inform and complement other regional initiatives and policies, such as the Leaders' Policy on

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Partnerships, the Regional Mechanism for the Selection and Appointment of Regional Candidatures to International Bodies (RMRC), and the recommendation of the High Level Political Talanoa relating to the development of a Forum Foreign Policy in a cohesive and coordinated manner.

Nuclear issues

7. New Zealand remains an engaged member of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues in the Pacific. This taskforce was established to deliver on PIF Leaders' 2019 decision to address the ongoing impacts of nuclear testing in the Pacific, with a focus on impacts in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Kiribati. It comprises Fiji, Kiribati, RMI and New Zealand with support from the PIF Secretariat and CROP agencies.

8. s6(a)

Papua

9. s6(a)

10. Papua has featured yearly on the PIF Leaders' agenda. New Zealand supported the 2019 Pacific Islands Forum's call for a visit to Papua by the Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights to provide an independent assessment, but this was not progressed. The UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Rights visited Papua in July 2025, but in an unofficial capacity.

11. Indonesia currently holds a seat on the Human Rights Council and the rotating presidency of the Council for 2026. New Zealand participated in Indonesia's Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council in 2022 and recommended that Indonesia uphold its human rights obligations in respect of Papua.

12. s6(a)

Bougainville

13. Prime Minister James Marape has announced publicly that National Parliament will vote on the Bougainville independence referendum result by 30 August 2026 - the 25th anniversary of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. s6(a)

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14. s6(a)

15. s6(a)

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Agenda item 4: Peace and Security (11:00am)

Handling Advice

s6(a)

- As a country in and of the Pacific, New Zealand has a direct stake in securing our **Ocean of Peace**. Regionalism, with the Forum at its centre, plays a critical role as we seek to advance our shared development and security priorities in an increasingly demanding environment.
- It is essential that decisions relating to our Pacific security are made for the region, by the region. The activation of the **Biketawa Declaration** and **the Regional Response Mechanism** in response to the fuel crisis are excellent examples this.
- Our Leaders have been clear as a Forum we can and should meet our own security needs. We welcome consideration of a **regional defence and security treaty**, as natural extension of this commitment and commend Prime Minister Wale on his leadership on this initiative.
- We also welcome our shared commitment to **the Treaty of Rarotonga.** Our region has long provided leadership on nuclear disarmament issues. And the world still needs to hear our voice. We must call on others to rebuild global cooperation on nuclear disarmament through strong language in our Communique.
- New Zealand recognises the immediate needs facing our region too. We need to do more to combat regional and domestic threats from **transnational, serious and organised crime (TSOC)**. This year we announced an NZD $10m investment to help address social harm from drugs across the Pacific.
- New Zealand's **Operation KIWA** has commenced work to disrupt drug trafficking in our region and we look forward to coordinating with the **Waqa Moana** initiative and others to combat this issue.
- We were pleased that **Pacific Police Ministers** convened this year to discuss these important issues and welcome the regularisation of that meeting. This, alongside the work of regional law enforcement bodies – the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police and Pacific Policing Initiative – will be vital to ensure the region can respond to these threats.
- Finally, New Zealand welcomes Australia's close partnering with Pacific Islands Forum members ahead of the **Pacific Pre-COP**, and Fiji and Tuvalu's hosting. The Pre-COP in Fiji and special leaders' event in Tuvalu which will help the world to see the first-hand impacts of one the region's greatest security threats.

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New Zealand's position

- New Zealand strongly supports the Forum as the apex of the regional security architecture and the role of Foreign Ministers in discussing regional security issues.

- New Zealand supports shared solutions to regional security problems, including TSOC, nuclear issues, and defence and security priorities.

Background

PRC Missile Launch and Nuclear Free Language

16. New Zealand has proposed stronger language on nuclear issues for the 2026 Leaders' Statement following the failure of the 2026 Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference, s6(a)

17. s6(a)

The Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting outcomes called for transparency and reassurance and emphasised the importance of all states acting consistently with the Blue Pacific. s6(a)

Transnational, Serious and Organised Crime

New Zealand has commenced Operation KIWA, a New Zealand Customs, New Zealand Defence Force and Government Communications Security Bureau initiative to improve coordination on combatting TSOC activities across the Pacific.

Australia and Fiji have developed the Waqa Moana *[pron: wonga moana]* maritime security initiative to enhance regional operational coordination and intelligence sharing. We are supportive of the initiative noting that KIWA is complementary to this.

Pacific Peace and Security Architecture and Governance

The Pacific Police Ministers' Meeting (PPMM) in May and the Joint Heads of Pacific Security (JHoPS) in April each proposed to incorporate under the regional security architecture. This is an effort to close operational gaps and better enable Pacific-led responses to security challenges under the oversight of Leaders.

At the PPMM, Pacific Police Chiefs provided an update on ongoing efforts to strengthen regional policing cooperation, including work to better connect the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police and the Pacific Policing Initiative into a unified regional body, to be known as PACPOL.

s9(2)(f)(iv)

s9(2)(f)(iv)

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s9(2)(f)(iv)

s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)

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Agenda item 5: Resources and Economic Development (11:30pm)

Handling Advice

s6(a)

- As we look around our region, it is clear that our most immediate challenges all have serious economic implications. We are living in a time of global uncertainty. Inflationary pressures, supply chain disruptions, infrastructure deficits, and tighter budgets are reshaping how we work.
- We have already spoken to the need to take a regional approach to security, but we also see a need to do more to secure our economic future. We must give more thought to shared standards, regulatory systems, and aligning of our own national policies.
- The **fuel crisis** has thrown this into sharp relief. We are concerned about the impact of the fuel crisis on both the people and governments of Pacific countries. Support measures are introducing significant fiscal strain across our region.
- There is no silver bullet to improve fuel security or affordability in the region. The best path towards economic and energy resilience is to reduce demand for imported fuels primarily through increased renewable generation and secondarily through improved energy efficiency.
- New Zealand welcomes further discussion with Members about how we can work together to reduce demand for imported fuels and help countries to meet their renewable energy targets.
- If we are serious about tackling these challenges, we need to return to **the Forum's core purpose** – to strengthen regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security.
- We continue to see **PACER Plus** as a key step towards greater regional economic integration. We encourage all Members who have not joined to give serious consideration to doing so.
- As the region's largest trade agreement, the benefits to members are clear: improved trade, investment, development assistance to build trade readiness and engagement on labour mobility.
- As New Zealand prepares to join the Troika, and as we look ahead to our hosting of the **56th Pacific Islands Leader Meeting,** it is this purpose which will guide us. We want our Forum to be delivering for the peoples of our region.
- On that note, we look forward to welcoming Leaders next in 2027. It will be a privilege to reciprocate the Pacific hospitality we have been so lucky to experience over the years.

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New Zealand's Position

Kava Declaration

- The Kava Declaration is a non-binding commitment by Pacific leaders to protect the cultural identity, authenticity, and economic value of kava. The Kava Declaration was endorsed by Forum Trade Ministers out-of-session last month, and will now be conveyed to Pacific Island Forum Leaders for their endorsement in Palau. We are comfortable with the Declaration and recommend New Zealand joins consensus. Further details are provided in the Informal Note – Pacific Islands Forum Out of Session Trade Ministers Consideration of the Draft Kava Declaration, sent to OMTI and OMFA on 9 July.

Pacific Resilience Facility

- New Zealand has pledged NZ$20 million towards the capitalisation of the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) and has ratified the PRF treaty. However, New Zealand remains concerned about the PRF's ability to attain its funding goal of US$500 million, s9(2)(g)(i)

Fisheries development

- New Zealand strongly supports the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and the Pacific Community (SPC). These CROP agencies play a central role in managing, protecting, and developing the Pacific region's crucial fisheries resources.

Fuel crisis

- New Zealand is concerned about the impact of the fuel crisis on both the people and governments of Pacific countries. Support measures implemented by governments place them under significant fiscal strain, and responses are often too broad and poorly targeted.
- We support a regional response to the crisis provided it remains focused on where value can be added and is complementary to national responses of Pacific countries.
- The Regional Fuel Security Assessment identified options to improve fuel security and/or affordability for some sub-groupings of countries in the region (pending further analysis), but there is no obvious single regional solution to respond to the fuel crisis.
- The only option that would benefit all members is to reduce demand for imported fuels through increased renewable generation and improved energy efficiency measures. New Zealand welcomes further discussion with members about how we can support initiatives to reduce demand for imported fuels and help countries to meet their renewable energy targets.
- New Zealand has worked closely with Australia, World Bank and Asian Development Bank to provide initial crisis support. Discussions are now moving towards medium-term support to reduce reliance on imported fuels. There is strong alignment between partners to take a system-wide approach and coordinate on investments and technical support in regulatory and SOE reform alongside infrastructure upgrades and energy efficiency approaches.

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Background

Pacific Resilience Facility

1. The Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) Council held its inaugural meeting on 25 June 2026 in Majuro. This event saw the PRF membership increase to 11 Pacific countries. While an interim CEO was appointed, the council failed to appoint an independent board and instead has agreed to a politically appointed interim board.

Fisheries development

2. The Minister for Oceans and Fisheries, Hon Shane Jones, hosted the Forum Fisheries Committee Ministerial Meeting (FFCMIN) and the Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting (RFMM) in Wellington from 30 June to 2 July 2026. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rt. Hon Winston Peters, attended the official welcome dinner at Parliament.

3. FFC and RFMM Ministers meet annually as the governing body of the FFA and as decision-makers for SPC's fisheries, aquaculture, and ocean programme. FFA supports its members to manage, protect, and develop their tuna fisheries. SPC supports tuna fisheries science, and coastal fisheries and aquaculture management. The memberships are aligned, but RFMM's includes American Samoa, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna. New Zealand and Australia are the two biggest funders of both organisations.

4. The Western and Central Pacific Ocean provides over half of the world's tuna supply, with a catch value exceeding US$6 billion a year. More than 80 percent of this tuna is caught within the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of FFA members. These countries earn over US$500 million a year from access fees paid by distant water fishing nations (DWFNs), in addition to revenue from domestic fleets (mainly re-flagged DWFN vessels).

5. The East New Britain Initiative (ENBI) is the region's flagship initiative to grow the economic returns from tuna. The platform, established in 2023 by the 17 Pacific Fisheries Ministers of the FFA, aims to expand the region's participation in the global tuna value chain through regional processing and other value-add opportunities. ENBI has been incorporated as regional collective action under the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan. Ministers recently approved the ENBI Implementation Strategy.

6. New Zealand has been supportive of ENBI. In mid-2025, we invited four Fisheries Ministers to New Zealand to engage with our primary industries. In May 2026, we arranged for scientists to share with Pacific fisheries officials how science can support the development of high-value products. We have funded the FFA-led Pacific Islands Tuna Venture Programme to build commercially viable, locally owned, seafood businesses, and funded FFA to support Pacific countries to meet export market requirements.

7. ENBI is an ambitious and challenging undertaking for the Pacific region. We assess progress is likely to be made by incremental initiatives among likeminded countries with complementary resources (such as infrastructure and tuna supply) that aggregate over time. Minister Jones has encouraged more engagement with the private sector.

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Fuel crisis

8. The Pacific region is exceptionally vulnerable to oil shocks due to the near total dependence on imported fuel. The crisis has already cost the region US$935 million in additional fuel costs since the start of the crisis to end of July. The key policy concern for Pacific governments is addressing the impacts of high prices, worsened by major sectors being underpinned by the price of fuel. Even if supply returns to a normal level in the short-term, the economic and social cost of the crisis will be significant.

9. As part of the immediate response New Zealand, Australia, World Bank and Asian Development Bank (Quads) worked closely to provide immediate financial relief (if requested by countries) and ensure regular supply chains. PIFS and CROP partners also activated a Regional Response Mechanism to strengthen regional data collection and analysis, assess emerging risks, and inform members of regional solutions.

10. The fuel crisis has bought energy and economic resilience to the forefront for Pacific leaders and development partners. Quads partners agree that this moment offers an opportunity to reinvigorate the region's focus on the transition away from fossil fuels and to explore policies, guidance and tools that can support more targeted social protection policies in crisis events.
s6(a)

11. s6(a) the Quads partners are also looking to strengthen ongoing collaboration on energy and economic reforms to increase resilience to the region's significant exposure to crisis events (natural and man-made).

12. The focus of this collaboration and the roles of the respective partners are still to be worked through and will be informed by Pacific Leaders' priority setting from PIFs and COP. However, there is strong alignment of thinking and willingness across Quads partners that the fuel crisis presents an opportunity to reinvigorate the transition away from fossil fuels and to develop a broader set of policy responses for social protection in crisis events. Quads partners are also discussing how MDB crisis response tools can also be better calibrated to meet the needs of Pacific governments.

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Agenda item 6: People Centred Development (12:30pm)

Handling Advice

s6(a)

- New Zealand supports the continued investment in the empowerment of women and girls, health, education, early childhood development, youth engagement and disability inclusion as critical foundations for Pacific prosperity, resilience and regional stability.
- New Zealand welcomes the **Forum Women Leaders Meeting's** call for renewed commitment to strengthening women's political leadership and representation, preventing gender-based violence, including online harms and technology-facilitated violence, and advancing the revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration.
- We support these Forum-led priorities, recognising that investing in people and enabling women's full participation, leadership and safety contributes to stronger institutions, more resilient communities, and a more secure and prosperous region.

New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand supports continued investment in health, education, early childhood development and the empowerment of women and girls, recognising these as critical foundations for economic resilience, prosperity and regional stability. In a challenging economic environment, sustaining investment in people remains essential to achieving the human development ambitions of the 2050 Strategy and delivering long-term resilience and opportunity across the Pacific.
- We support the Forum Women Leaders Meeting's call for renewed commitment to increasing women's political leadership and representation and strengthening prevention of gender-based violence. We want to strengthen these Forum-led priorities, recognising their importance to stronger institutions, more resilient communities and a more secure and prosperous region.

Pacific Framework on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- The PIF Women Leaders Meeting endorsed the refreshed Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which aligns disability inclusion with broader regional priorities. The framework refresh was led through PIF processes, with strong input and support from the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF), a key regional partner that New Zealand continues to support. New Zealand contributed to the refresh process, and the statement is consistent with existing policy settings.

Background

1. The empowerment of women and girls and social inclusion is increasingly being recognised through economic and regional stability lenses. Women hold fewer than 12% of parliamentary seats across the Pacific, around two-thirds of Pacific women experience violence in their lifetime, and gender-based violence can cost countries up to 3.7% of GDP. Recent regional discussions

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have reinforced the importance of strengthening women's leadership, and preventing gender-based violence, including online harms.

2. There is a need to better invest in Pacific youth, who are projected to make up around one-third of the region's working-age population by 2035.There is new momentum to advance disability inclusion through the refreshed Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

3. New Zealand invests in Pacific health to advance primary health care, strengthen health systems, build resilient communities, and address key health challenges across the region. This includes Non-Communicable Diseases prevention, detection and management linking data, policy and planning with early detection, primary care management and essential services.

4. Early childhood development is increasingly recognised as a foundation for lifelong learning, wellbeing, and resilience. New Zealand supports ECD regionally in partnership with UNICEF and through bilateral investments.

5. For New Zealand education is a key component to developing prosperous, peaceful, and resilient communities. In addition to bilateral education support in a number of member countries, New Zealand continues to support the implementation of the Pacific Educational Regional Framework (PacREF) and the Conference of Pacific Education Ministers (CPEM). For the region teacher shortages, low learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy, and a growing digital divide are pressing issues.

6. New Zealand recognises the role of sport in supporting health, education, leadership and social inclusion outcomes across the Pacific. We support efforts to increase opportunities for women and girls through sport, promote positive social norms and respectful behaviour, and engage men and boys as partners in preventing gender-based violence and building safer, more inclusive communities.

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Agenda item 7: Climate Change and Disasters (2:00pm)

Handling Advice

s6(a)

- New Zealand welcomes Australia's close partnering with Pacific Islands Forum members ahead of the **Pacific Pre-COP**, and Fiji and Tuvalu's hosting.
- The Pre-COP in Fiji and special leaders' event in Tuvalu will be important to show the world the impacts of climate change in the Pacific first-hand and to highlight Pacific leadership.
- New Zealand is committed to partnering with you to secure global support for the **Pacific Resilience Facility** and to highlight Pacific leadership on renewable energy, oceans and sea level rise.
- We continue to stand with our Pacific partners on the issue of **sea level rise**, which is of critical importance to the region. We have been actively working with fellow PIF members to promote our regionally held positions on sea-level rise, including in the upcoming UN political declaration on sea-level rise.
- We appreciate Palau's hosting of the ***Leaders Ascent Dialogue*** yesterday, and the additional focus that brought to investment in Pacific renewable energy and ocean-climate action, and we look forward to a successful Pre-COP that delivers for our region.
- New Zealand also welcomes the change in emphasis from commitments to implementation at the **6th Pacific Regional Energy & Transport Ministers Meeting**, recognising the need for stronger coordination across our Blue Continent to deliver on renewable energy ambitions.
- Transforming the Pacific's ambition into accelerated action will require strengthened regional leadership, coordination and accountability of implementation efforts across the renewable energy sector.
- ***[If raised]:*** *We welcome the establishment of a Renewable Energy Commissioner for the Pacific and support the integration of the Commissioner into the existing regional architecture to strengthen coordination and collective action. To this effect, we support the placement of the role within the Pacific Community (SPC), and a mandate for dual reporting to both SPC and the PIF Secretariat. This linkage will provide the necessary oversight to take regional action only where it adds value to country-led delivery.*

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New Zealand's Position

Climate Change

- Reinforcing Pacific leadership on climate ambition and climate resilience is a priority for New Zealand's engagement with the Forum.

- New Zealand supports agreed Pacific Partnership priorities for the Pre-COP and is actively participating in the Partnership.

B.E.L.A.U. Climate Declaration and Our Pacific Gender Pact

- New Zealand supports the B.E.L.A.U Climate Declaration and Our Pacific Gender Pact. The proposed Declaration articulates PIF Leaders' climate priorities and calls for accelerated action on renewable energy, climate finance, the transition away from fossil fuels, the ocean-climate nexus, and implementation of international climate obligations. It aims to strengthen Pacific leadership ahead of Pre-COP events in Fiji and Tuvalu and COP31 in Türkiye. Consistent with New Zealand's support for Pacific climate advocacy, the non-binding Declaration generally reflects agreed PIF and UN language and does not commit New Zealand to any action inconsistent with domestic settings.

- The proposed Pact aligns with New Zealand's existing commitments to gender equality, inclusive decision-making, and locally led development in the Pacific. The focus on strengthening Pacific women's leadership in climate governance, improving gender-responsive climate data and evidence, and advancing access to climate finance is consistent with current policy settings and development priorities.

Renewable Energy Commissioner

- PIF Leaders agreed to establish a regional Renewable Energy Commissioner in 2023. Leaders are now asked to endorse the TORs. These establish the Commissioner as primarily an interface between the region's political ambitions and technical implementation. Operationalising the Commissioner role is important to support PIC ambitions for renewable energy transition, energy security and resilience, and to support advocacy for renewable energy investment in the region.

- Oversight of the Commissioner role would sit with the Pacific Regional Transport and Energy Ministers Meeting, supported intersessionally by the Pacific Senior Energy Officials Meeting. The establishment of the Commissioner is currently funded by Denmark through to 2028, s6(b)(i)

Background

1. This Leaders' Meeting is an important occasion for the region to coalesce and voice its priorities on climate change ahead of the Pacific Pre-COP and special Leaders' event in Fiji and Tuvalu from 5-8 October. Forum Foreign Ministers have welcomed Palau and Tuvalu's proposal for a Leaders' Declaration on Climate Change, and inclusion of a Leaders Climate and Gender Pact. Palau has indicated it sees its Leaders' Ascent Dialogue as a preparatory event linked to the Pre-COP, with a focus on renewable energy investment and ocean-climate action.

2. The Pre-COP presents an opportunity for New Zealand, with other Members, to champion Pacific climate initiatives, such as the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) and to attract additional partners to successful regional initiatives like the New Zealand-UK TIDES renewable energy financing initiative. New Zealand has pledged NZ$20 million towards the PRF and we continue to encourage partners to consider meaningful contributions towards the PRF's capitalisation and to support a successful PRF pledging event at COP31.

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3. Forum Leaders have directed Pacific Climate Ministers to oversee regional preparations for Pre-COP and COP31. Minister Watts attended the recent July Pacific Climate Ministers Talanoa in Sydney in July. COP31 Pacific Partnership priorities include s6(b)(ii) pledging campaign to capitalise the PRF, attracting investment in Pacific renewable energy and showcasing Pacific leadership on Ocean.

4. New Zealand is currently engaging on s6(b)(ii) tangible initiatives that will improve Pacific (and SIDS') access to climate finance.

B.E.L.A.U. Climate Declaration

5. s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)

Sea Level Rise

6. New Zealand supports the positions of the Pacific Islands Forum on sea-level rise. Our officials in New York are working to advocate strongly for PIF positions in the ongoing negotiations for a UN political declaration on sea-level rise.

New Zealand's climate finance

7. Climate change is an important focus for New Zealand's International Development Cooperation (IDC) Programme in the Pacific. Having delivered a significant scale up in the quantum of our climate finance from 2022 – 2025 ($818m in the Pacific and $1.32 billion total), we are consolidating our support through 2026 –2029. Around 960m climate-related support is programmed including around $770m for the Pacific.

6th Pacific Regional Energy and Transports Ministers Meeting

8. PRETMM6 was held in May 2026 and saw a renewed focus on the establishment of a Renewable Energy Commissioner for the Pacific, seeking to address the technical and financial challenges of regional energy planning.

- This proposal received endorsement from PIF Leaders in 2023, however progress on developing a Terms of Reference (ToR) was stalled by the delay of the PIF-led Review of the Regional Architecture (RRA).
- The Pacific Community (SPC) and the PIF Secretariat (PIFS) have developed a draft ToR for decision by PIF Leaders at the 55th PIFLM in Palau.
- The ToR outlines the purpose, guiding principles and objectives of the role, focusing on implementation with a clear delineation between the political mandate of PIF Leaders and the technical advocacy of the Commissioner.
- Ministers at the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting (FFMM) supported the placement of the Commissioner role within SPC, with dual reporting arrangements to both SPC

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and the PIFS. However, there is significant further work required by SPC and the PIF Secretariat to establish and operationalise the new approach.

9. Pacific Energy Ministers endorsed two regional policy documents at PRETMM6: the Pacific One Maritime Framework (POMF) and the Framework for Energy Security and Resilience 2026-2030 (FESRIP 2.0). Development of the POMF was endorsed by PIF Leaders under the PIF 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. PIF Leaders also endorsed the original Framework for Energy Security and Resilience 2021-2030 (FESRIP) in 2021, and FESRIP 2.0 shifts the framework's emphasis from setting strategic direction to delivery.

10. Palau's desire for inclusion of a goal of 100% Renewable Energy in the PRETMM6 Energy Ministers Outcome Statement was ultimately agreed by Ministers, consistent with previous PIF Leader's statements, with the addition of text, s6(a) that this target would 'reflect differing national circumstances and transition pathways'.

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Agenda item 8: Ocean and Environment (2:30pm)

Handling Advice

s6(a)

- New Zealand supports the development of the **Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Ocean Statement.** The Statement will provide a clear description of the Pacific position on Ocean issues in key global events.
- New Zealand is pleased to endorse the **Vakamanu Strategy.** The Strategy will be an important guide for future management of coastal and oceanic fisheries and aquaculture

New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand supports development of the new Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Ocean Statement.
- New Zealand strongly supports the new *Vakamanu Regional Pacific Fisheries Strategy 2026–2035* as the region's new overarching fisheries and aquaculture policy framework.

Background

1. New Zealand recognises the centrality of the ocean to the livelihoods, economies, and overall resilience of Pacific countries. For this reason, New Zealand has a strong portfolio of development activities that supports the sustainable development of the fisheries sector, helps improve coastal fisheries, enhanced ocean planning and governance, and builds climate resilience. This includes providing the support for Palau to develop its Sustainable Ocean Policy, expected to be announced/shared at the Pacific Island Forum by Palau's Prime Minister.

Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Ocean Statement

2. The Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner has coordinated the development of the 2026 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Ocean Statement, which sets out agreed Pacific positions that will guide Pacific engagement in upcoming meetings including the thirty first United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31, November 2026), the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Agreement (BBNJ COP1, January 2027), and the fourth United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC 4, June 2028). New Zealand engaged throughout the development process.

3. In early August, Forum Foreign Ministers welcomed the 2026 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Ocean Statement and agreed to finalise it out of session for submission to Leaders for consideration at the 55PIFLM.

Vakamanu Regional Pacific Fisheries Strategy

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

4. At the Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting in Wellington in July, Ministers endorsed the *Vakamanu Regional Pacific Fisheries Strategy 2026–2035* as the region's new overarching fisheries and aquaculture policy framework. The new strategy sets the region's aspirations for fisheries over the next 10 years and aligns with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

5. A key feature of the new strategy is that it brings together offshore fisheries, coastal fisheries and aquaculture under a single regional framework while recognising their distinct needs. Aquaculture is included more explicitly than in the previous policies, reflecting its growing importance for food security, livelihoods, climate resilience and economic development.

6. New Zealand participated in development of the Vakamanu Strategy both through the Pacific Community (SPC) and Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) member consultation process and as a member of the Troika overseeing the development process.

s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)

7. s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)

Deep Sea Minerals

8. New Zealand continues to support the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner (OPOC) who has been facilitating Pacific dialogue on deep sea minerals. At the recent Pre-Forum Session of the Forum Officials Committee, officials endorsed recommendations in the Implementation Plan for Member-Led Regional Approach to Deep Sea Minerals and the Paper on Regional Repository for Deep Sea Mineral Data and Knowledge for onward consideration by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders.

BBNJ Agreement and secretariat hosting

9. The implementation of the BBNJ Agreement on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction is a high priority for PIF members. We have drafted the legislation needed before New Zealand can ratify the Agreement, s9(2)(g)(i)

We therefore expect to attend COP1 in an observer capacity.

10. But we are taking a close interest in the key question of where the Agreement's secretariat will be hosted. China, Chile and Belgium are lobbying to be the host, with the decision to be taken at COP1. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

11. s6(a)

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Agenda item 9: Technology and Connectivity (3:00pm)

Handling Advice

s6(a)

- New Zealand was pleased to attend the inaugural **Forum ICT Ministers Meeting** in July. We approach the accelerating pace of digital transformation across the Pacific with clear-eyed realism. The opportunities are significant, but so are the risks.
- That is why we welcome the endorsement of the **Pacific Digital and AI Technology Principles**, which place resilience, transparency, and Pacific values at the centre of our region's approach to digital technologies and artificial intelligence.
- New Zealand continues to support **greater connectivity** in the Pacific, including through investments in submarine cable infrastructure to help bridge the digital divide, digital skills development to harness the digital economy, and cyber security cooperation to ensure technology uptake is safe and effective. As we look ahead to our Chair year, we look forward to continuing our work with Forum Members to deliver practical outcomes for Pacific peoples.

New Zealand's Position

Information, Communication and Technology

- The Pacific Digital and Artificial Intelligence Technology Principles are a set of non-binding principles intended to guide investment in, and adoption and governance of AI, cloud, and digital infrastructure across the Pacific. They are focused on issues such as sovereignty, resilience, transparency, affordability, and cultural protection. The Principles were introduced by Papua New Guinea and were endorsed by Pacific Islands Forum ICT Ministers in Port Moresby in July, with strong support from Forum members.
- The Principles provide a foundation to help ensure Pacific countries can maximise the benefits of digital technologies and ensure that AI is adopted in a way that reflects Pacific priorities, values, and circumstances. They are a valuable signal to third countries and tech companies of region's expectations when it comes to technology, and they also provide clear strategic direction ahead of the proposed development of a broader regional AI Governance Framework. Importantly, they do not commit New Zealand to anything that would be inconsistent with our domestic approach to AI. We support the Principles being endorsed by Forum Leaders.
- s9(2)(f)(iv)

Regional connectivity

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- Better regional connectivity is important for long-term Pacific prosperity and resilience. To this end, New Zealand has again offered to transport Pacific leaders to Palau for this year's PIF Leaders Meeting.
- New Zealand is providing $3.6m over two years to enable regional aviation agency the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO) to provide technical services, training, advice and regulatory support to nine Pacific states (Vanuatu, Naoero, Kiribati, Tonga, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Niue, Cook Islands and Tuvalu). This support helps Pacific states improve their aviation safety and security and enable economic development and tourism through better air connectivity.

Pacific Tourism Office (SPTO) funding

- s6(a)

  New Zealand and Australia, as observers, have lobbied for membership to be limited to Pacific Island Countries.
- s6(a)

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Background

1st Pacific Islands Forum ICT Ministers Meeting (FICTMM)

1. Former Minister Hon Christopher Penk, attended the 2026 Forum ICT Ministers Meeting in Port Moresby on 23 July. While the group has met since 2023, this was the inaugural meeting since its formal integration into PIF architecture.

2. New Zealand's contributions to the Pacific's digital transformation and cyber resilience include NZ$80 million in IDC investment to develop submarine cable infrastructure, NZ$6 million to build digital capability through the regional Pacific Digital Economy Programme, and NZ$10 million to improve preparedness for cyber threats through the Cyber Security Support to the Pacific Programme. In addition, the GCSB's National Cyber Security Centre provides significant cyber capacity-building through their Pacific Partnerships Programme.

3. Key outcomes from the FICTMM, which will be considered at the PIFLM, included agreement to develop:

- A regional AI Governance Framework, incorporating the endorsed Pacific Digital and AI Technology Principles s6(a)
- A regional approach to Safer Digital Spaces; and
- A Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Framework to support implementation of the Pacific ICT Digital Transformation Action Plan 2026–2030.

4th Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting (RAMM)

4. RAMM4 was held in May 2026 and had a significant focus on the limited state acceptance of amendments to the Pacific Islands Civil Aviation Safety and Security Treaty (PICASST). This remains below the threshold required for entry into force, despite unanimous endorsements of proposed amendments at RAMM2 in 2022 and the subsequent lodgement with PIFS.

5. s6(b)(ii)

Pacific Tourism Office (SPTO) funding

6. s6(a)

7. Forum Leaders will consider whether SPTO should remain a standalone agency or whether further analytical work should be undertaken to support a future decision to subsume SPTO into another regional agency (e.g. SPC) as part of the Review of Regional Architecture. s6(a) However, current indications are that there is regional support for SPTO to remain an independent organisation.

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PRIORITY BILATERALS AND PULL-ASIDES: FORUM MEMBERS

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Palau: Minister of State Gustav Aitaro, Palau

Time and date: TBC Lunch at Elilai Restaurant: 12pm, Sunday 30 August



Minister Aitaro [pron: *eye-tah-row*] has been Palau's Minister of State since September 2021. Aitaro was re-appointed in early 2025 s6(a)

Aitaro has a long career in diplomacy, having worked at the Ministry of State for two decades, including as Director (Secretary equivalent). He later served as the Special Assistant to the Office of the President on Foreign Matters. He is personable and a good friend of New Zealand.

You met in August in the margins of the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in Suva.

Checklist of Issues

Pacific Region

- Congratulate the Minister for Palau's hosting of PIFLM. New Zealand looks forward to working alongside Palau on the Troika.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- Endorse Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Naoero Agreement's (PNA's) Vessel Day Scheme.

Bilateral relationship

- Note the importance of President Whipps' visit to New Zealand in April, the first official visit by a Palauan President.
- Note New Zealand has since disbursed NZ$2.2 million as grant funding to support economic reform in Palau, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank.

[If raised] ***NZ Support to Palau hospital***

- s6(a) Note we looking at ways in which we can contribute to the project as it progresses.

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Naoero ["NOW-ero"]: President David Adeang

Time and date: TBC 3.15pm, Tuesday, 1 September



His Excellency David Adeang ["ah-dee-yung"] was re-elected as President following Nauru's October 2025 general election. Adeang has served as President since October 2023 and has been a Member of Parliament since 2001.

He has held several senior ministerial portfolios, including finance and justice, and is one of Nauru's most experienced political figures.

You last met in September 2025 in Port Moresby during PNG's 50th anniversary of independence.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Recall our visit in 2024 and our gratitude for President Adeang's hosting.
- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Camilla Solomon as Naoero's first High Commissioner to New Zealand in 2025, cross-accredited from Canberra.
- **Development:** Reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to supporting Naoero's long-term economic resilience. Highlight New Zealand's contribution of NZ$1 million annually (2019–2034) to the Nauru Intergenerational Trust Fund. As of June 2026, the Fund held assets of approximately AUD$479 million.
- **Trade:** Seek an update on Naoero's consideration of ratifying PACER Plus. What can New Zealand do to support this?
- **Tokelau fisheries:** Endorse Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Naoero Agreement's (PNA's) Vessel Day Scheme.
- s6(a)

Background:

- s6(a)

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The Cook Islands: Prime Minister Mark Brown

Time and date: 10.30am, Tuesday 1 September



Preliminary results of the 12 August Cook Islands election show **Hon Mark Brown** is very likely to be re-elected as Prime Minister of the Cook Islands Government for the third time. After a post-election deal with three independent MPs from Mangaia, his Cook Islands Party is on track to win two thirds of the seats in Parliament.

Ministerial portfolios have not yet been confirmed. However, prior to the election, Brown held Ministerial responsibilities for Finance and Economic Management, Attorney General, Public Service Commission, Police, Seabed Minerals Authority, Tourism, Energy and Renewable Energy, Outer Island Special Projects, and Telecommunications.

You last met Prime Minister Brown on 1 April during your visit to Rarotonga for the signing of the Declaration on Defence and Security.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Cook Islands Election:** Congratulate Brown on his successful re-election as Prime Minister.
- **Relationship normalisation**: Welcome the normalisation of the relationship after a challenging period.
- Underscore New Zealand's efforts to deliver on the Declaration on Defence and Security, including to again hold NZDF Exercise Tropic Twilight in the Cook Islands – this time in Penrhyn (last year it was in Mauke).
- **Penryhn Wharf:** Note our pleasure to be investing in Penryhn Wharf in partnership with the Cook Islands and US, with New Zealand as implementing partner.
- s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Palau: President Surangel Whipps Jr

Time and date: TBC



His Excellency Surangel Whipps Jr has been President of Palau since 2020. He was re-elected in 2024 for a second four-year term. Constitutionally, he will not be eligible to run for the Presidency again in the 2028 election. Whipps continues to hold the finance and education portfolios while his nominations are held up in the Senate. Prior to his Presidency, Whipps served two terms as a Senator in the Palau National Congress.

You last met when hosting President Whipps for lunch at Harbour Society in Auckland, during his visit in April this year.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Congratulate Palau for hosting the Pacific Islands Forum and note that you look forward to working alongside Palau on the Troika.
- Note the importance of President Whipps' visit to New Zealand in April, the first official visit by a Palauan President.
- Following the visit New Zealand disbursed NZ$2.2 million as grant funding to support economic reform in Palau, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank.
- **Tokelau Fisheries:** Endorse Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Nauru Agreement's (PNA's) Vessel Day Scheme.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- *[If raised: **Palau Hospital**]* s6(a)

  We will closely study the US feasibility study when it is finalised, including on whether NZ can make a contribution to the development.

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Republic of the Marshall Islands: President Dr Hilda Heine

Time and date: TBC



Her Excellency Dr Hilda Heine ["hi-nee"] was the first female President of RMI from 2016-2020 and was re-elected in 2024. s6(a) She has an extensive background in education, including as Minister of Education, President of the College of the Marshall Islands, and Pro-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific. She was the first Marshallese person to earn a doctorate.

You both attended PIFLM in Tonga in late August 2024, following your visit to RMI in earlier that month.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral**: Highlight New Zealand's support to the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) on climate-induced loss and damage, and through technical assistance to the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA) to strengthen resource management and combat illegal fishing. Emphasise New Zealand's commitment to continuing support in these areas.
- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Junior Aini as RMI's first Ambassador to New Zealand in April 2025, cross-accredited from Suva.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Climate:** Acknowledge the pre-eminent threat climate change poses for RMI. Note New Zealand is exploring ways to support RMI's climate adaptation and we're lobbying hard for external Pacific Resiliency Facility contributions. Seek President Heine's views on her priorities.

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Tonga: Minister for His Majesty's Diplomatic Services, HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala

Time and date: TBC



Heir to the throne **HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala** [address as: "Your Royal Highness" and subsequently "sir"]. A small bow on meeting would be respectful. The Crown Prince is Minister for His Majesty's Diplomatic Services and Minister for His Majesty's Armed Forces.

You both attended the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in Suva, 7 August.

Checklist of Issues

- **Crown Prince Visit:** Welcome an official visit from the Crown Prince to New Zealand s6(a)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i) Note we were pleased to host Lord Privy Seal Viliami Malolo in August. s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii)
- s6(a)
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)
- **PIF Troika:** Acknowledge Tonga's leadership to the Pacific Islands Forum as part of the current Troika.

Background:

- s9(2)(b)(ii)

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Solomon Islands: Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Rick Houenipwela

Time and date: TBC



Hon Rick Houenipwela *(Ho-en-ip-weller)*, commonly known as Rick Hou *(Ho)*, was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade in May 2026. A former Prime Minister (2017-19), he entered politics in 2010 following a distinguished career with the Central Bank of Solomon Islands which included serving as Governor, s6(a) He visited New Zealand as Prime Minister in 2018.

You both attend the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting in August but last met formally with Hou when he accompanied Prime Minister Wale to New Zealand in early June.

Key Messages

- **Rescue of NZ hikers:** Reiterate our thanks for the rescue of the two NZ hikers in Guadulcanal that we included in our letter of 4 August and we appreciated your response of 20 August.
- s6(a)
- **RSE**: Share that, s6(b)(i) New Zealand is now offering additional support for Solomon Islands' participation in the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme. This includes up to NZD 600,000 in grant funding to the Solomon Islands Labour Mobility Unit.
- **Regional security treaty proposal:** Express interest in Prime Minister Wale's proposal for a Forum regional security treaty, s6(b)(i)
- s6(a)

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Papua New Guinea: Prime Minister James Marape

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Hon James Marape has been Prime Minister since 2019, after previously serving as Finance Minister. The son of a pastor, Marape is a devoted Seventh-day Adventist and a keen golfer.

You last met Prime Minister Marape in September 2025 for PNG's Independence Day.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Highlight the strong momentum in the bilateral relationship. Since your August 2025 visit to Port Moresby, we have advanced several key commitments, including expanding our small business programme into the Highlands, supporting PNG trade negotiators, strengthening defence cooperation and deepening policing ties with the RPNGC.
- **Bougainville:** Note New Zealand welcomed the Parties' (Papua New Guinea Government and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville) endorsement of the Melanesian Framework and Joint consultations Report on 5 August.
- **El Nino response:** Note New Zealand concern about the potential humanitarian impacts of a severe El Niño weather event. Note we are keen to discuss how partners can best support PNG's response efforts.
- s6(a)

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Tuvalu: Prime Minister Feleti Teo

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Hon Feleti Teo [*pron.* Fell-ety Te-oh] was unanimously selected as Prime Minister of Tuvalu on 26 February 2024. Teo spent the past 23 years in prominent positions in regional Pacific institutions, including as the Deputy Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum (2007-2013), and the Executive Director of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (2014-2023).

You last met during Teo's Guest of Government visit to New Zealand in March 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Pre-COP:** Note New Zealand looks forward to supporting Tuvalu to host a successful Pre-COP special leaders' component. New Zealand has committed a C-130 aircraft to assist with Pre-COP logistics.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Tokelau fisheries:** Note New Zealand's deep concern about Tokelau's exclusion from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement Vessel Day scheme (PNA VDS).
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Samoa: Deputy Prime Minister Afioga Mulipola Anarosa Ale-Molio'o

Time and date: *TBC*



Hon. Afioga Mulipola [Moo-lee-poh-lah] **Anarosa Ale-Molio'o** took on the role of Deputy Prime Minister in March 2026, in addition to the Minister of Finance portfolio. Mulipola made history in 2021 as Samoa's first female Minister of Finance under former-PM Fiame's Government. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

and is one of two returning Cabinet Ministers after the FAST Party's election victory in 2025. She is an auditor and accountant by profession.

You last met Mulipola while in Apia during the Independence Day Anniversary in June 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- Acknowledge the importance of the PIF and highlight Samoa as a founding member of the PIF plays an important role as a voice that upholds democracy, good governance, and a peaceful region.
- **Hosting 2027:** New Zealand looks forward to warmly welcoming Samoa and the rest of the PIF membership to New Zealand for our hosting of the PIF Leaders' Meeting in 2027, consistent with our longstanding cooperation in advancing Pacific regionalism.
- s6(a)
- s6(b)(i)

  Acknowledge Samoa's vulnerability to higher fuel prices which will flow through the economy and the risk of supply shocks down the track. New Zealand will continue to work closely with Samoa if they need technical or other support to help them get through the crisis.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

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The Federated States of Micronesia: President Wesley Simina

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



His Excellency Wesley Simina [pron: *see-me-nah*] is a long-standing figure in FSM politics and was sworn in as President in May 2023. Climate change is a key focus for Simina's foreign policy agenda. Simina's domestic policy is focused on national unity – given FSM is made up of four geographically and culturally distinct states. Prior to becoming President, Simina served as Speaker of the FSM Congress from 2015 to 2023 and as Governor of Chuuk State from 2005 to 2011.

You both attended PIFLM in Tonga in late August 2024, following your visit to FSM earlier that month.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Drinking water programme:** Highlight New Zealand's support for early childhood development and safe drinking water in FSM in partnership with UNICEF. New Zealand also provides technical assistance to National Oceanic Resource Management Authority to strengthen marine resource management and combat illegal fishing.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- [*if raised: climate* change] Acknowledge the threat climate change poses for FSM. Note New Zealand is exploring ways to support FSM's climate adaptation. Seek President Simina's views on his priorities.
-
- s6(a)

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PRIORITY BILATERALS AND PULL-ASIDES: FORUM DIALOGUE PARTNERS

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Chile: Minister of Foreign Affairs: Francisco Pérez Mackenna

Time and date: TBC: 11-11.30pm, Sunday 30 August



Minister Francisco Pérez Mackenna [Frahn-SIS-coh PEH-rez mah-KEH-nah] was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in March 2026. He is a prominent Chilean businessman who served as the CEO of one of Latin America's biggest holding companies (Quiñenco) for almost two decades. He is married with eight children, and likes race cars, hunting, and tennis. Minister Pérez Mackenna has professed an affinity for New Zealand, having visited several times in a personal capacity. You have not met previously but had an introductory phone call in May 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Reaffirm the value we attach to our relationship with Chile, which is one of most import in Latin America. Reflect on your visit to Chile in March.
- **PIF:** Acknowledge Chile's connections to the Pacific and welcome its decision to attend PIF at ministerial level. You may want to share your perspectives on visiting Rapa Nui/Easter Island.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- **Countering illegal drugs:** Emphasise the seriousness we attach to working together to disrupt the flow of drugs to the Pacific. This is demonstrated by our establishment of new Police Counsellor and Customs Counsellor positions, both based in Bogota with a regional remit.
- *[If raised, partnerships mechanism]*: Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.
- s6(a)

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United Kingdom: Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Indo-Pacific, Baroness Rosie Winterton

Time and date: 11-11.30am, Monday 31 August



The Rt Hon Baroness Winterton was appointed in July 2026. Baroness Winterton's responsibilities also include small island developing states (SIDS). A senior Labour politician, she served as MP for Doncaster Central from 1997 to 2024, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons from 2017 to 2024 and has held ministerial roles across health, transport, work and pensions, local government and justice. Most recently, she served as the UK's Trade Envoy to Bangladesh. Baroness Winterton has not visited New Zealand or the Pacific Islands region in any official capacity.

This is your first meeting with Baroness Winterton.

Checklist of Issues:

- Congratulate Baroness Winterton on her appointment as UK Under-Secretary of State for Indo-Pacific and ask what her top priorities will be in her new role. Note we appreciated her predecessor Sima Malhotra's focus on our region.
- **Strategic challenges:** Encourage the UK to stay engaged in the Pacific and share perspectives on geostrategic developments in the region.
- **Development:** Highlight the chance for the UK to make a meaningful contribution to the Pacific s6(a) by focussing on areas where it has expertise; and on advocacy for Pacific countries and SIDS issues in multilateral institutions.
- **PRF contribution:** Encourage the UK to support regional priorities by contributing to the Pacific Resilience Facility.
- **Maritime security:** Acknowledge the UK contribution to Pacific maritime security through the deployment of offshore patrol vessels in coordination with New Zealand and Fiji.
- **COP:** Note New Zealand looks forward to joining the UK at Pre-COP to showcase the progress of the US$100 million TIDES blended finance fund for renewable energy in the Pacific, of which NZ$40 million is funded by NZ (NZ$16 million) and the UK (NZ$24 million).

*[If raised, **PIF partnerships mechanism**]*

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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France: Minister Delegate for Francophonie, International Partnerships and French Nationals Abroad Éléonore Caroit

Time and date: 9.30-10am, Tuesday 1 September



Éléonore Caroit *[pron: ay-lay-oh-NOR ka-RWAH]* has served in her current ministerial portfolio since October 2025. A French-Dominican lawyer specialising in international arbitration, she practised in Paris, New York and Geneva before entering politics. Elected to the French National Assembly in 2022 to represent French citizens in Latin America and the Caribbean, she served as Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs Committee and as a board member of the French Development Agency (AFD).

Checklist of Issues:

- **France and Pacific:** We appreciate our longstanding cooperation with France in the Pacific. For example, maritime surveillance and disaster response under the FRANZ programme, and police cooperation against transnational, serious and organised crime.
- **Regional security:** Note our strong interest in deepening the Forum's regional security architecture. We will work to ensure that proposals are appropriate for all Members, in line with their respective arrangements and competencies.
- **New Caledonia/French Polynesia:** Reiterate New Zealand's desire to be a helpful and constructive partner s6(a) Note New Zealand's ongoing interest in practical support to New Caledonia, including developing follow up initiatives to the successful July 2025 New Caledonia Study Tour to New Zealand focussed on economic development and the Māori economy.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- *[If raised, **partnerships mechanism**]* Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region. We cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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Background:

RESSET

1. In November 2024 you approved the Renewable Energy Solar and Storage on Efate and Tanna (RESSET) project, s6(a)

2. s6(a)

3. RESSET is the Vanuatu Government's top priority renewable energy project and a major component of its National Energy Road Map to achieve near 100 percent renewable electricity generation by 2030. s6(a)

4. RESSET will deliver solar photovoltaic and battery energy storage systems on Efate (where the capital Port Vila is located) and Tanna in Vanuatu, reducing annual fuel imports by US$1.4 million (NZ$2.25 million) and making tangible New Zealand's commitment to Vanuatu as a collaborative, responsive donor of preference. Construction and commissioning of both the Tanna and Efate sites is due to be completed in mid-to-late 2027.

5. The Tanna component of New Zealand's flagship Vanuatu renewable energy project broke ground on 7 July 2026 at a ceremony attended by Prime Minister Napat, Acting Deputy Prime Minister Johnson, and Climate Minister Regenvanu. s6(a)

6. s6(a)

7. s6(a)

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United States: Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau

Time and date: TBC: 2.30-3pm, Tuesday 1 September



Hon Christopher Landau commenced his role as Deputy Secretary of State in March 2025.

Secretary Rubio has delegated the Pacific portfolio to Landau s9(2)(g)(i)
After PIF, he will travel on to the Federated States of Micronesia and the Solomon Islands, having recently hosted Prime Minister Wale in Washington. s6(a)

You last with Landau in April 2026 in Washington. The discussion focused on coordination with the US in the Pacific and the impact of the war in Iran on Pacific economies.

Checklist of Issues:

- **US/PIF:** Congratulate Landau on the impressive scope of new initiatives the US will announce at PIF and welcome US Ambassador Novelly's prioritisation of travel to Samoa and the Cook Islands early in his term.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a) Welcome the positive outcome on the Penrhyn wharf project and the substantial US investment.
- s6(a)

[If raised, ***partnerships mechanism****]*

- s6(a)
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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Germany: Parliamentary State Secretary of the Environment Ministry Bettina Hagedorn

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Bettina Hagedorn *[beh-TEE-nah HAH-geh-dorn]* is a senior German Social Democratic Party (SPD) politician and long-serving Member of the Bundestag, representing Schleswig-Holstein since 2002. She is an experienced politician particularly in the finance/budgetary space.

Since April 2026 she has served as Parliamentary State Secretary – akin to an Associate Minister - at Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. She has a strong personal interest in marine conservation and the protection of the Baltic Sea, which neighbours her electorate.

Address as State Secretary Hagedorn.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Germany and Pacific**: Welcome Germany's increased engagement with the Pacific, including the opening of an Embassy in Suva in 2023, formal diplomatic recognition of Niue in 2026, and pledged contribution to the Pacific Resilience Facility.
- Emphasise the importance of sustained and credible engagement with the Pacific. Note that Foreign Minister Wadephul and the Bundestag's Germany-Pacific Friendship Group visited the Pacific earlier this year.

*[If raised, **partnerships mechanism**]*

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

Released Under the Official Information Act 1982

Japan: State Minister of Foreign Affairs Iwao HORII

Time and date: *Pull-aside*



Mr Iwao HORII *[pron. Hor-ree-ee]* has been a State Minister for Foreign Affairs since September 2023. He was first elected to the Upper House in 2013 and has previously served as Deputy Secretary-General of the LDP and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Horii is a respected politician and a friend of New Zealand. He enjoys travelling, rugby, war-time history, and eating gourmet food.

You met Horii in February 2026 when he visited New Zealand. He has travelled in the Pacific s6(a)

Checklist of Issues

- Welcome Japan's continued support for Pacific priorities, including its important **Visit:** Acknowledge your recent visit to Tokyo, which made clear the strategic alignment between our countries, including in relation to the Pacific.
- **Bilateral:** Note our desire to uplift our bilateral relationship, as we celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations in 2027.
- Welcome Japan's continued support for Pacific priorities, including its important development assistance to the region.
- s6(a)

*[If raised, **partnerships mechanism**]*

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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Norway: Special Political Envoy for the Foreign Minister, Milla Skaug Ødegaard



Milla Skaug Ødegaard *[MEE-lah SKOWG UR-deh-gore]* is a Norwegian Labour Party politician and Political Adviser to Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs. s9(2)(a) she has a background in law, local government, and Norway's UN delegation in New York. She has worked on international issues including climate diplomacy, Ukraine, and peace-building efforts in the Middle East.

You have not met her before.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Reinforce the value New Zealand attaches to our relationship with Norway and our shared commitment to the international rules-based system. Note your visit to Norway in October 2025, and your recent meeting with the Norwegian Foreign Affairs Minister Eide at the ASEAN FMM.
- **Pacific regional:** Reflect on Pacific regional challenges. Welcome Norway's increasing efforts and engagements in the Pacific, including its planned announcement of support for the Pacific Resilience Facility at this year's PIFLM.

*[If raised, **partnerships mechanism**]*

- Note the important role of Forum Dialogue Partners in the region.
- Note we cannot pre-empt Leader's decisions, but we anticipate partners will be informed ahead of any public communication.

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BIOGRAPHIES: FORUM MEMBERS AND TOKELAU

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Australia: Prime Minister Anthony Albanese



Hon Anthony Albanese was re-elected for a second three-year term on 3 May 2025, becoming the first Prime Minister since John Howard to lead his party to consecutive election victories. With such a resounding mandate, much of Albanese's first-term Cabinet remain in their roles. Albanese has been the leader of the Australian Labor Party since 2019 and the MP for the NSW division of Grayndler since 1996. He was born in Sydney and studied economics at the University of Sydney. He is married to Jodie Haydon, and has one son from his previous marriage.

Checklist of Issues:

- Reiterate New Zealand's interest in exploring joining the Ocean of Peace Alliance s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Fiji: Prime Minister, Sitiveni Rabuka



Hon Sitiveni Rabuka [*pron.* See-the-veh-knee Ram-boo-kah] became Fiji's Prime Minister for the second time in December 2022. PM Rabuka heads up the People's Alliance Party and leads a three-way Coalition Government. Fiji's next election is due by February 2027 (date yet to be set), with constitutional reform to be considered before then.

s9(2)(a)

s6(a)

Checklist of Issues:

- Recall that you signed the refreshed Duavata Partnership in July with Minister Ditoka when he visited Auckland, reflecting our shared commitment to strengthening our relationship across all pillars.
- Highlight how pleased New Zealand was to have Foreign Minister Ditoka attend the Future of Investment and Trade Partnership Ministerial Meeting and meet with Minister McClay. s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- Note that recent engagements have highlighted how much work we have ahead of us to achieve our goal of NZ$2 billion in two-way trade by 2030. New Zealand looks forward to stepping up this work under the Duavata Partnership.
- s6(a)
- s6(b)(i)
- s6(a)

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French Polynesia: President Moetai Brotherson



Moetai Brotherson was elected President of the Government of French Polynesia in May 2023 for a term of five years. He speaks English.

In April 2026, a major split occurred in the pro-independence Tāvini Huira'atira Party, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) The break became formal in July when Brotherson left Tavini to become leader of the breakaway group A Fano Tia ("Stay the Course"). s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

You last met Brotherson on 8 March 2026 during your visit to Papeete while returning from the Latin American mission.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral:** Note our warm bilateral relationship and enhanced development cooperation and recall our visit to Tahiti in March.
- **Development:** We are offering for French Polynesia, with eligibility from 2026 for up to three Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship Programme postgraduate scholarships, and vocational training, work placements and English language training for young people.
- **Domestic politics:** Enquire about the state of French Polynesian politics s6(a)
- **Pacific region:** Exchange views on Pacific regional challenges, and how to develop resilient, adaptable communities, including through greater regional integration.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Kiribati: President of the Republic of Kiribati, His Excellency Taneti Maamau



His Excellency Taneti Maamau is serving his third term as Kiribati President, after being re-elected in 2024. s6(a), s9(2)(a)

In his capacity as Kiribati's Foreign Affairs Minister, he attended the PIF Foreign Ministers Meeting virtually. s6(a)

You last met President Maamau in last September's UNGA.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Bilateral dialogue:** Welcome the efforts underway to implement the Te Mauri Dialogue, including scheduling our senior officials to meet through High Level Consultations later this year.
- Reflect on your visit to Tarawa in January, including your visit to New Zealand-funded development projects such as the award-winning Betio Hospital.
- **Development:** Note the broad range of bilateral cooperation on fisheries, health, vocational training and labour mobility, including work currently underway to design the NZ$20 million Kiribati–New Zealand Health Sector Support Programme 2026-2032 announced in January.
- **Ordinance disposal:** Thank President Maamau for the Kiribati system's leadership and cooperation to undertake the Unexploded Ordinance disposal operation currently underway by NZDF in Betio.
- **PIFS Sub-Regional Office:** Welcome the PIFS Sub-Regional Office for Micronesia's opening in Kiribati.
- s6(a)
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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New Caledonia: Member of Government for Mines and Energy, Alcide Ponga



Alcide Ponga ["pon-ga"] was appointed member of Government responsible for Mines and Energy on 5 August 2026 following long-overdue provincial (territorial) elections in June 2026. He is the immediate former President of the Government of New Caledonia (January 2025 until 31 July 2026). s9(2)(g)(i)

You last met Ponga (when he was President) in Nouméa during your May 2025 visit to New Caledonia.

Checklist of Issues:

- **New Caledonia Election:** Welcome the election of the 19th Government of New Caledonia and congratulate Ponga on his appointment as Minister of Mines and Energy.
- **Prospects for stability**: Note New Zealand has a strong interest in enduring peace and stability in New Caledonia. s6(a)
- Invite Ponga's views on the new government's early priorities in addressing the territory's economic and social challenges.
- **NZ support:** Reiterate New Zealand's desire to be a helpful and constructive partner for New Caledonia and France. s6(a)
- In particular, we are developing follow up initiatives to the successful July 2025 New Caledonia Study Tour to New Zealand focussed on economic development and the Māori economy.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Niue: Prime Minister Dalton Tagelagi



Hon Dalton Tagelagi [*pron.* tah-ng-eh-lah-gee] was re-elected Prime Minister in May 2026. He won his village seat by one vote (111:110) and the Prime Minister vote 11:9. He is a Member of Niue's 19th General Assembly, representing Niue's most populous village constituency of Alofi South. Prime Minister Tagelagi was first elected Premier in June 2020 and re-elected with the title of Prime Minister in April 2023.

You last met Prime Minister Tagelagi in Auckland, July 2026.

Checklist of Issues:

- **Realm Leaders Meeting:** Seek Prime Minister Tagelagi's reflections on the inaugural Realm Leaders' meeting on 28 August.
- **War memorial event:** Note the special ceremony taking place this week 26 August in Niue to hand over service memorial headstones for 39 Niue veterans who served in WWI.
- s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)
- s6(a)
- **PACER Plus**: Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Solomon Islands: Prime Minister Matthew Wale



Hon Matthew Wale ["Wa-leh"] has been Prime Minister of Solomon Islands since 15 May 2026. As Opposition Leader, he was a prominent and at times outspoken critic of successive governments. Wale was educated at Christ's College in Christchurch and studied accounting and finance at Victoria University of Wellington. He is fond of Rugby Union and played while at Christ's.

You last met Wale during his visit to New Zealand in June this year.

Checklist of Issues:

- s6(a)

- **Labour Mobility:** Note that officials are engaging directly with Solomon Islands' Labour Mobility Unit to progress enhanced capacity support, which could include a Country Liaison Officer in New Zealand to support growth in Solomon Islands RSE worker numbers.

- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

- **Regional Security proposal:** Seek an update on Wale's proposed regional security treaty. s6(a)

- s6(a)

- s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Tonga: Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua



Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua [*pron. Faka-fah-nu-ah*] is the Prime Minister of Tonga and, Minister of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications; Minister of Police, Fire, Emergency Services and Prisons; and Acting Finance Minister.

You last met Lord Fakafanua in June 2026 in Samoa during Independence Day celebrations.

Checklist of Issues:

- **PIF Troika:** Acknowledge Tonga's leadership in the Pacific Islands Forum as part of the current Troika.
- **Tongan visits:** s6(a)
  We would also welcome a visit by Lord Fakafanua and His Majesty King Tupou VI at a mutually convenient time.
- s6(a)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i) Note that we were pleased to host the Lord Privy Seal in Wellington in August. s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii)
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Vanuatu: Minister of Climate Change Hon Ralph Regenvanu



Hon Ralph Regenvanu [*"Ray-gen-vah-noo"*] is Vanuatu's Minister for Climate Change Adaptation, Energy, Environment, Geo-Hazards and Disaster Management. Regenvanu is well-disposed to New Zealand irrespective of diverging policy positions. s9(2)(a) Minister Regenvanu is Vanuatu's Head of Delegation as Prime Minister Jotham Napat has competing domestic priorities.

You last met Regenvanu at the UN General Assembly in September 2025.

Checklist of Issues:

- **PIF:** Seek Vanuatu's priorities for the Forum, noting the importance New Zealand places on Vanuatu's contributions as a leader in the climate space.
- **RESSET Renewable Project:** Note the recent groundbreaking of the RESSET project in Tanna contributing to Vanuatu's ambition to eliminate the use of fossil fuels.
- s6(a)
- **Melanesian cooperation:** Note Vanuatu's efforts to deepen Melanesian cooperation, with the recent signature of MOUs with Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Seek views on how shared issues are being addressed through regional architecture.
- s6(a)
- **PACER Plus:** Note our positive cooperation through PACER Plus which is the Pacific's key trade agreement. s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

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Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat: Secretary-General Baron Waqa



Baron Waqa [WONG-gah] became Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in June 2024. A former President of Nauru (2013-2019), he brings deep political experience to the role. As Secretary-General, he leads the Forum Secretariat and serves as Permanent Chair of the CROP agencies.

You both attended the Forum Foreign Ministers in August, but your last meeting with Mr. Waqa was during a layover in Fiji in January 2026.

Checklist of Issues

- s6(a)

- **PIF Troika:** Comment New Zealand looks forward to working more closely with the Secretary General when we join the Troika in September, and as host of the 56th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting.
- **NZ Hosting:** Note New Zealand's hosting will be guided by the Forum's central purpose - strengthening regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security.
- Ask the Secretary-General about the Secretariat's plans for preparing a Hosting Arrangement for New Zealand's consideration.

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Tokelau [Associate Member]: Ulu Alapati Tavite



Alapati Tavite [*pron.* Ahla-paati Ta-vitee] became Ulu o Tokelau for the second time in February 2026. This is a national titular head role that rotates annually between Tokelau's three Faipule and includes the foreign affairs, justice, and public service portfolios. As Faipule (Chief Representative) of Nukunonu Atoll, he also carries the national ministerial portfolios for finance and health.

You last met the Ulu in June 2026 in Apia at Samoa's 64th Anniversary of Independence.

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Checklist of Issues:

- **Tokelau Centenary:** Congratulate the Ulu on Tokelau successfully hosting commemorations for the centenary of New Zealand's administration of Tokelau in July this year (attended by the Administrator of Tokelau and PM La'aulialemalietoa Leuatea Schmidt of Samoa).
- **Fisheries:** Note New Zealand remains very concerned about Tokelau's unfortunate removal from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Vessel Day Scheme and the extra budgetary pressures that this is creating. New Zealand remains committed to working alongside Tokelau to resolve this situation as soon as possible, which includes us writing a letter in support of their case.
- **Transport:** Acknowledge current challenges facing Tokelau regarding transport frequency, and with fuel supply vulnerability. New Zealand officials are working closely with Tokelauan officials on options to build Tokelau's fuel reserves and storage capacity as well as the commissioning of a renewable energy solar power system to cut diesel dependence.

NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

PRIME MINISTER

RT HON CHRISTOPHER LUXON

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM LEADERS MEETING

BRIEFING PACK

2 - 4 September 2026



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OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

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Overview and Objectives

1. Your attendance at the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Retreat at this very busy time demonstrates to Pacific Partners the importance New Zealand – and you personally – place on our Forum membership. That is even more significant in the lead up to New Zealand's hosting in 2027. As the next chair, you will join the Forum Troika in Palau, alongside the current (Palau) and former (Solomon Islands) chairs.

Regional context

2. This year's Leaders Meeting comes at a challenging time for the Forum. s6(a)

3. s6(a)

4. Alongside geopolitical pressures, the Pacific continues to be significantly vulnerable to external shocks. The recent fuel crisis has added nearly US$1 billion to the region's fuel import bill since February, while El Niño conditions and climate change are expected to increase the frequency and severity of cyclones and droughts, increasing hardship, displacement, and loss of life.

5. With this framing, we suggest three key objectives for your time in Palau:

- ***Setting the tone for New Zealand's 2027 Forum chairing and Troika membership:*** New Zealand's three-year leadership term within the Forum begins in Palau. It will be important to lay the groundwork through strong Leader-level relationships, demonstrating that New Zealand is investing in its hosting year and testing ideas for possible New Zealand initiatives.
- ***Finalising key regional architecture reforms*:** a final decision in Palau on Strategic and Sectoral Partnership Mechanism tiering s6(a) under the new system in 2027. Leaders will also discuss potential amalgamation of regional agencies under a three-pillar, five-agency model s6(a)
- ***Advancing discussions on regional security priorities*:** we want the Forum to be the central point for regional security discussions, s6(a) This includes being ready to engage on the Pacific's immediate security challenges – such as transnational crime, drug harm, HIV, and climate change.

New Zealand's 2027 hosting

6. New Zealand's hosting of the Forum in 2027 and Troika Membership is a significant opportunity for New Zealand to demonstrate leadership s6(a) in the Pacific over the next three years.

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7. Alongside building strong Leader-level relationships, we suggest you use the Leaders Meeting as a testing ground with your counterparts on potential initiatives for our 2027 hosting. s9(2)(f)(iv)

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Troika, including media stand-up

8. New Zealand formally joins the Troika at the conclusion of the Retreat. Your first engagement as a Troika Member will be a media stand-up – alongside President Whipps, Prime Minister Wale and PIF Secretary General Waqa – following the Retreat. While we expect Whipps, as Chair, to lead, this will allow you to register the importance of the Forum. We anticipate New Zealand media – there are 13 travelling to Palau – s9(2)(g)(i)

9. As a member of the Troika from September 2026 – September 2029, New Zealand will join the current and immediate-past chairs in providing strategic leadership and political stewardship of the Forum between the annual Leaders Meetings. In practice, this involves several meetings per year to discuss implementation of Leaders' decisions and supporting the Secretary General to respond to emerging regional challenges before they are considered by the wider Forum membership. Troika Leaders also act as political champions for Forum priorities, sharing responsibility for representing the Forum internationally.

Dialogue Partnership Mechanism and regional reforms: the "Review of Regional Architecture"

10. s9(2)(g)(i) inviting Dialogue Partners to the Forum, under the existing format. In Palau, Leaders are expected to make decisions on implementing the new Partnerships Mechanism, including the tiering of Strategic and Sectoral Partners. s6(a)

s6(a)

11. s9(2)(f)(iv)

12. Our key interest is reaching final agreement. Agreement in Palau would give certainty to Partners s6(a)

13. s6(a)
. A decision on amalgamating Pacific regional agencies into a three-pillar, five-agency model was deferred by Leaders in 2025 pending further consultations. s6(a)

Growing regional security cooperation

14. s6(a)
we have seen significant momentum in the regional security space in recent months. Most significantly, Fiji and Australia signed the Ocean of Peace Alliance (Veitacini Treaty) in July, establishing new Alliance architecture; s6(a)

15. s6(a)

New Zealand Police is supporting Palau's hosting under the Pacific Policing Initiative and offered to host Pacific Policing Support Group s6(a)
observers for the PIF Leaders' Meeting in 2027. The New Zealand Defence Force has just assumed the Chair of the humanitarian-focused Pacific Response Group, in the context of what we expect to be a challenging weather and cyclone season.

16. Forum Leaders are seized of the need to act together on transnational, serious and organised crime and New Zealand's Operation KIWA has drawn interest from Members. KIWA aims to target organised crime flows across the Pacific and has commenced operations with partners including Fiji and Tonga. Australia and Fiji's Waqa Moana initiative extends this concept into a regional initiative, s6(a)

17. Separately, Solomon Islands Prime Minister Wale has proposed a Pacific-wide 'Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace Regional Security Treaty'. This could formalise Members' commitment to counter regional security challenges s6(a)

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Palau's PIF55 priorities and outcomes

18. Palau's theme for the meeting is "B.E.L.A.U – Building Economies: Life. Action. Unity." (in reference to its indigenous name, Belau). Alongside this theme, Palau has indicated a focus on economic resilience and ocean management through a Leaders Ocean Statement and shepherding a conversation on the regional response to the fuel crisis.

19. We anticipate Leaders will be asked to reappoint the Pacific Ocean Commissioner s9(2)(f)(iv) and endorse the following statements and deliverables. These are consistent with New Zealand policy settings and we recommend New Zealand joins:

- **B.E.L.A.U. Declaration for Urgent and Inclusive Climate Action to Keep 1.5°C Within Reach:** a non-binding declaration setting out PIF Leaders' climate priorities ahead of COP31, calling for accelerated action on renewable energy, climate finance, the transition away from fossil fuels, the ocean-climate nexus, and implementation of international climate obligations.
- **Kava Declaration:** a non-binding declaration protecting the cultural identity, authenticity and economic value of kava as a key Pacific product.
- **Pacific Framework on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:** a refreshed regional framework aligning disability inclusion with broader Pacific priorities and strengthening regional cooperation on disability rights.
- **Leaders Ocean Statement:** setting out agreed Pacific positions on ocean issues to guide regional engagement in upcoming global forums, including COP31.
- **Pacific Renewable Energy Commissioner Terms of Reference:** endorsement of the governance arrangements for the new Renewable Energy Commissioner role, established to support Pacific renewable energy transition, energy security and resilience objectives.
- **Pacific Digital and Artificial Intelligence Technology Principles:** a set of non-binding principles to guide the adoption, governance and investment of AI, cloud and digital technologies in ways that reflect Pacific priorities, values and interests.

Palau bilateral relationship

20. As New Zealand prepares to join the Troika, s6(a) New Zealand expects to provide approximately NZ$13 million in development assistance to Palau during 2024–2027, in areas such as ocean management, climate resilience, and justice sector capability. s6(a)

. We have received further requests s6(a) to contribute toward the Palau National Hospital, which is currently under consideration.

Programme

21. You will travel to Palau by NZDF aircraft, arriving in Koror on the evening of Wednesday 2 September. You will be joined on the flight by several media outlets. Your programme includes the Leaders Dinner, Retreat and Closing Ceremony; short bilateral engagements; as well as regular media stand-ups. You will depart early Friday morning, arriving back in New Zealand Friday evening.

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Key Visit Messages

Overarching tagline: "New Zealand is stepping up our leadership in the Pacific"

1. New Zealand steps into a Pacific leadership role

- New Zealand has joined the **Pacific Islands Forum Troika** and is preparing to host Pacific Leaders in Auckland in 2027. This puts us at the centre of regional decision-making for the first time in more than a decade.
- Our approach will be guided by **Pacific priorities and PIF centrality**, reflecting our longstanding belief that a strong Forum is fundamental to New Zealand's security, prosperity and engagement in the Pacific.
- As we take on this leadership role, we want to be a country that shows up when it matters, working with Pacific partners to tackle shared challenges and build a stronger, more secure Pacific region.

2. The Pacific matters to New Zealand

- **New Zealand is a Pacific nation**. Our own security, prosperity and future are tied to the success of the region.
- Two-way trade with the Pacific region (excluding Australia) has surpassed **NZ$4 billion** ($2.7b exports, $1.4b imports). The region is our **7th largest export market** and **11th largest trading partner**. A stable, prosperous region is good for New Zealand.
- Around **17,000 Pacific workers** help New Zealand's agriculture sector meet seasonal workforce needs each year through the Regional Seasonal Employment (RSE) scheme.
- That is why New Zealand is stepping up. We are working alongside Pacific partners to tackle shared challenges, with more than **30 government agencies** active in the region, over **$600 million development assistance** invested in the Pacific in the last year, and pathways for Pacific peoples to live and work in New Zealand.

3. Regional challenges require regional solutions

- The Pacific is facing a more **complex set of challenges** than ever before, from climate change and maritime security threats to organised crime, illegal fishing and energy security. These issues impact New Zealand and require a regional response.
- We do not want our region to be a theatre of **geopolitical contest**. External powers need to respect the wishes of the Forum and its members.
- The Pacific Islands Forum remains the region's premier political institution, bringing countries together to address the challenges that no country can solve alone.
- Regional cooperation delivers results. The **fuel crisis** response showed the value of collective action when the region needed it most.
- Greater integration is good. **PACER Plus** is increasing trade, growth and investment across the Pacific. Easier movement of people, goods, and capital, combined with more aligned standards and regulations, will drive growth, investment, and build resilience.
- Regional cooperation strengthens security. **New Zealand Police** supports Pacific partners to combat transnational, serious and organised crime, build policing capability, and respond to regional events and crises, making our region safer and more resilient.

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Map of Pacific



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Map of Palau



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PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

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Event: Leaders Dinner Hosted by PIF Secretary General

Time and date: 1800, Wednesday, 2 September

Objectives

- This will be your best opportunity to build rapport with fellow Forum Leaders ahead of the Leaders Retreat. We expect this to be a social rather than working event, with a speech from Secretary General Baron Waqa at the top s9(2)(g)(i)

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Palau Pacific Restaurant
- This dinner is exclusively for Leaders and their spouses.

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Event: Forum Leaders Retreat

Time and date: 0930-1330, Thursday, 3 September

Objectives

- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

Agenda

Forum Leaders, chaired by Palau President Whipps Jr, are expected to work through key issues, building on discussions from the previous day's Plenary. Secretary General Waqa will be in attendance. Concurrently, Senior Officials will work to finalise the Leaders Communiqué.

s6(b)(ii)

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Meeting logistics

- Venue: President's Whipps's private residence at Ngarchelong [*nah-rt-chih-long*]
- Transport: Motorcade. The President's residence is 75 minutes' drive from the hotel.
- Dress code: Pacific Formal (shirt provided in your hotel room)
- During the Retreat, your accompanying Senior Official will be Mark Ramsden. He will be in a separate location with other Senior Officials, and you will be able to communicate via cell phone.

Event: Closing Ceremony

Time and date: 1800-2000, Thursday, 3 September

Objectives

- Demonstrate New Zealand's commitment to its Pacific Islands Forum hosting year through Prime Ministerial attendance, noting New Zealand Prime Ministers have not typically attended the ceremony due to scheduling constraints.

Guests

- Delegates, including Leaders (in VIP seating), Ministers, officials and PIF partners.

Agenda

- While the programme is not yet confirmed, it is expected to include cultural elements and remarks from Palau President Whipps Jr.

Meeting logistics

- Venue: Palau National Gymnasium

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KEY ISSUES

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Forum Regional Issues

Review of Regional Architecture

Key Objective

- s6(a)

What might others want?

s6(a)

s6(a)

Key Messages

- New Zealand approaches this discussion in the spirit of regional unity. We have a real opportunity to ensure the CROP agency structure is fit for the future.
- s6(a)
- We want to see efficient and effective regional agencies that work together. s6(a)
- We will need clear reporting and review structures within the Roadmap s6(a)
- s6(a)

Background

1. It is for Leaders to make decisions on the Review of Regional Architecture to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. In 2026, Leaders deferred decisions on four Review recommendations and sought further advice. The Troika Review Committee will present a final report and recommendations to Leaders in Palau on three of these issues.

2. Specifically, Leaders did not agree to the main structural reforms, opting instead to seek further advice on the three pillar, five agency model and asked for further advice on the potential amalgamation of Pacific Regional Agencies. s6(a)

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3. Following Troika Review Committee consultations with Members and agencies, there is general support for the three-pillar (1. Political, Policy, Economics and Trade; 2. Technical and Scientific; and 3. Academic) approach for greater CROP coordination and harmonisation. Differing views remain regarding agency absorption into a five-agency model s6(a) Whatever happens, New Zealand wants to see a coordinated and effective network of regional agencies, with clear roles and responsibilities, a strong focus on delivery, and a clear line to Leaders.

4. s6(b)(ii)

s6(a)

5. s6(b)(ii)

s6(a)

6. s6(b)(ii)

s6(a)

7. s6(a)

8. The other two outstanding recommendations from the report are:

a) s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv)

b) s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv)

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Dialogue Partnership Mechanism

Key Objectives

- Finalise agreement on the Forum's Partnerships Mechanism, s6(a)
- Pursue a well-balanced Strategic stream s6(a)
- Push Leaders to hold Partners accountable to their commitments to Forum Members, s6(a)

What might others want?

s6(a)

Key Messages

- Emphasise the importance of Dialogue Partners in a contested international environment. Strong partnerships support our region's security and prosperity. They also help to hold Partners to account on the things that matter to us.
- Welcome the opportunity to finalise the Forum Dialogue Partnership Mechanism. We look forward to implementing these decisions in 2027.
- The reform process must:
  - Improve engagement for both Forum Members and our Partners – we need structured, high-quality engagement with all our Partners, irrespective of status.
  - Keep the Forum in the driving seat. It is critical Partners respect our collective priorities and procedures.
- s6(a)

Background

1. The decision for Leaders in Palau will be how to divide up the Strategic and Sectoral Partners groups. s6(b)(ii)

2. s9(2)(g)(i)

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s9(2)(g)(i)
s6(b)(ii)

3. s6(b)(ii)

4. s6(b)(ii)

s6(b)(ii)

4. s6(b)(ii) ASEAN has 11 Comprehensive or Strategic Dialogue Partnerships, 10 Sectoral Dialogue Partnerships and 5 Development Partnerships.

ASEAN Partnerships	
Comprehensive Strategic Partners (7)	Australia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, United States
Strategic Dialogue Partners (4)	Canada, European Union, Russia, United Kingdom
Dialogue Partner (1)	Türkiye
Sectoral Dialogue Partners (10)	Brazil, Denmark, Germany, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, South Africa, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, Qatar
Development Partners (5)	Chile, France, Italy, Netherlands, Peru

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s6(b)(ii)

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s6(b)(ii)

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Taiwan and the Forum

Key Objectives

- s6(a)

What might others want?

s6(a)

Key Messages

- s6(a)

- s6(a)
- s6(a)

Background

1. s6(a)

We continue to encourage Pacific partners, Taiwan and China to respect the decisions of Forum Leaders.

2. The 1992 Forum Communiqué sets out – in its brief paragraph 54 - engagement terms for Forum members with Taiwan. It institutionalised the "Taiwan/ROC-Forum Countries Dialogue", to be held at the "same venue as the Forum" s9(2)(g)(i) "but separate from the existing Post-Forum Dialogue. Participating countries would do so in their own right and would not represent the Forum as a whole."

3. Taiwan was not part of the Dialogue Partner process and is referred to informally as a "development partner" (a category unique to Taiwan). s6(a)

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Suva Agreement Costs

Key Objectives

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

What might others want?

s6(a)

Key Messages

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

Background

1. The 2022 Suva Agreement helped resolve 'Micronexit', when Micronesian PIF members threatened to leave the PIF over concerns of lack of representation. It established a sub-regional rotation system for the Secretary General appointment (Baron Waqa is the first appointed under this system, representing Micronesia); the establishment of an independent Pacific Ocean Commissioner, based in Palau; a Forum Sub-Regional Office in Kiribati; and a second Deputy Secretary-General role in the Secretariat.

2. New Zealand and Australia contributed NZ$1.5 million and NZ$2.5 million respectively to support the implementation of the reforms. Leaders agreed in 2022 to share these costs between the membership from 2026. s6(a)

3. s6(a)

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Regional Security Issues

Key Objectives

- Leverage recent momentum s6(a) to reinforce New Zealand's support for the Forum as the apex of regional security architecture governance and decision-making.
- Work to address other security concerns, including working towards shared solutions to regional security problems such as TSOC, cyber and HIV.
- s6(a)

What might others want?

s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(a)

Key Messages

- s6(a) At the apex of regional security architecture, the Forum plays a critical role in advancing our shared development and security priorities.
- We need fit-for-purpose security architecture. We strongly support the proposal to institutionalise the Pacific Police Ministers Meeting. We are comfortable adding the Joint Heads of Pacific Security to the regional security infrastructure.
- s9(2)(f)(iv)

- s6(a)

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- Combatting threats from transnational, serious and organised crime in our region is a priority for New Zealand. Initiatives such as Waqa Moana [*pron: wonga moana*] are welcome and complementary with our own Operation KIWA. We support its establishment.
- The rapidly growing HIV outbreak in Fiji, alongside worsening HIV trends in other parts of the Pacific including Papua New Guinea, is a serious regional public health concern. It highlights the wider health and social harms associated with increasing illicit drug use and the importance of addressing these alongside strengthening law enforcement.

Background

s6(a)

1. s6(a)

2. s6(a)

3. New Zealand has s6(a) proposed strong language on nuclear issues for the Communiqué following the failure of the 2026 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. Given our region's history, we see a role for Forum Leaders in reinforcing global cooperation on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Proposal for a Pacific-wide security agreement

4. s9(2)(f)(iv)

s6(a)

Transnational, Serious and Organised Crime

5. New Zealand has commenced Operation KIWA, a New Zealand Customs, Defence Force and Government Communications Security Bureau initiative to increase coordination and create an enduring, intelligence-led border security operation to detect, deter, and disrupt drug flows across the Pacific.

6. Australia and Fiji have developed the Waqa Moana maritime security initiative to enhance regional operational coordination and intelligence sharing, facilitated through the Maritime Essential Services Centre in Suva. We are supportive of the initiative and are engaging with Australia to confirm how Operation KIWA can coordinate and work with Waqa Moana. For example, when NZDF assets are deployed in the region, Customs intelligence analysts could work through the Waqa Moana structures to share information and build capacity.

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Pacific Peace and Security Architecture and Governance

7. An outcome of the Pacific Police Ministers' Meeting (PPMM) in May was a proposal to institutionalise the PPMM as a regular security-focused meeting in the PIF calendar, and to include the Joint Heads of Pacific Security (JHoPS) under Forum governance processes. The proposal received support in principle from Forum Foreign Ministers in August, for further consideration during Leaders' Plenary.

8. New Zealand strongly supports the institutionalisation of the PPMM as a regular Forum ministerial meeting. s6(a)

9. New Zealand also supports the inclusion of JHoPS into the regional security architecture, as it would enable better connection between political discussions in the Forum and operational discussions in JHoPS. s6(a)

10. In addition, JHoPS is developing a Regional Operations Deployment Framework, a treaty-level agreement that would pre-agree arrangements for the deployment of personnel from member countries following a request for assistance. s6(a)

HIV Epidemic

11. Fiji is experiencing the fastest growing HIV epidemic globally, with a 14-fold increase in reported cases over the last five years and around 12,000 people living with HIV in the country. The epidemic is driven by unsafe injecting practices associated with methamphetamine use, including sharing injecting equipment. Papua New Guinea has also declared a National HIV Crisis.

12. New Zealand is supporting Fiji's HIV response through NZ$4 million for Fiji's HIV Surge Strategy and Outbreak Response Plan to reduce transmission, expand access to treatment, and combat stigma and discrimination. This is alongside broader Pacific investments in HIV prevention, testing, treatment and community outreach through the United Nations Population Fund and the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

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Regional Economic Issues

Key Objectives

Position the potential economic elements of New Zealand's 2027 hosting by:

- Conveying our support for the Pacific in response to the fuel crisis and our commitment to address the underlying drivers of economic vulnerability, including the Pacific's high exposure to imported fuels, by exploring ways to reduce demand.
- Encouraging all PIF members to join PACER Plus, as the region's only comprehensive Free Trade Agreement.
- Endorsing the Kava Declaration and reaffirming New Zealand's support for strengthening the recognition, protection, and value of kava ("green gold") as a culturally significant Pacific product and an important contributor to economic development across the Pacific.

What might others want?

The most immediate needs in our region are economic. The Forum can demonstrate its value by delivering tangible economic benefits to its Members. The Forum's (and SPC's) work on the fuel crisis is one example.

New Zealand has provided additional fuel crisis budget support under the International Development Cooperation programme s6(a) Other Pacific countries may be looking for additional budget support to address the fiscal impacts from the fuel crisis.

Key Messages

Fuel crisis

- New Zealand is concerned about the impact of the fuel crisis on Pacific countries.
- We support a regional response to the crisis provided it remains focused on where value can be added and is complementary to the national responses of Pacific countries.
- There is no silver bullet to improve fuel security or affordability in the region. The best path towards economic and energy resilience is to reduce demand for imported fuels through increased renewable generation and through improved energy efficiency.
- New Zealand welcomes further discussion with Members about how we can work together to reduce demand for imported fuels and help countries to meet their renewable energy targets.
- If we are serious about tackling these challenges, we need to return to the Forum's core purpose – to strengthen regional cooperation and integration through policy alignment on areas such as economic growth and security.

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PACER Plus

- Expanding PACER Plus membership is a key step towards the goal set by PIF Leaders for greater regional economic integration.
- PACER Plus is creating a predictable, transparent trading environment to encourage investment and economic growth. Against the background of increasing global trade uncertainty, PACER Plus is delivering benefits for participating Pacific countries and advances Pacific solutions to Pacific challenges and opportunities.

[If required] Regional Labour Ministers Meeting

- s6(a)
- s6(a)

Background

Strait of Hormuz closure - Fuel crisis

1. The Pacific region is exceptionally vulnerable to oil shocks due to the near total dependence on imported fuel. The fuel crisis resulting from the closure of the Strait of Hormuz has cost the region US$935 million in additional fuel costs since the start of the crisis to end of July. Continued high fuel prices will impact on the operations of major sectors (electricity, fisheries, health, retail, shipping, tourism). Even if supply returns to a normal level in the short-term, the economic and social cost of the crisis will be significant on governments, businesses and households.

2. As part of the immediate response New Zealand, Australia, World Bank and Asian Development Bank worked closely to provide immediate financial relief (if requested by countries) and ensure regular supply chains. New Zealand has provided emergency budget support to s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii), s9(2)(f)(iv)

Combined, the ADB, Australia, New Zealand, and the World Bank are planning to provide around USD300 million in support to the region. While this support is significant, it is considerably below the total impacts noted in the above paragraph. It will also come at the expense of other development priorities. Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) have used portfolio reallocations which mean other development projects need to be deferred.

3. The Forum Secretariat and CROP partners also activated a Regional Response Mechanism to strengthen regional data collection and analysis, assess emerging risks, and inform members of potential regional solutions.

4. A New Zealand-funded Fuel Security Assessment provided valuable analysis on the vulnerability of the region and the specific circumstances and challenges of each Pacific country. The assessment noted that potential solutions will work for countries differently. For example, while investment in additional storage could improve resilience in countries with limited storage capacity and low stockholding levels, it is unlikely to deliver significant benefits

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in countries that already maintain substantial stock cover. Additional storage brings additional costs, creating a trade-off against affordability.

5. The assessment confirmed that countries are best placed to manage the trade-offs across energy security, affordability, and sustainability according to their own context and circumstances. It also highlighted that reducing dependence on imported fuel is the best option to strengthen economic and energy resilience in the medium term.

6. New Zealand, Australia, World Bank and Asian Development Bank are now discussing how immediate crisis responses can transition into medium-term support, and what is required to improve long-term energy security. These partners agree this requires an approach that reforms the energy system as a whole, covering policy and regulatory reform, SOE reforms, smart infrastructure, and energy efficiency measures. Collectively the four partners represent the largest donors in the region, with expertise and funding to make a significant impact on supporting a shift away from imported fuels over time.

7. The meeting in Palau provides an opportunity for Leaders to discuss the impacts of the fuel crisis, the efficacy of country, regional and donor responses, and options to increase energy and economic security over the medium-term. As incoming Chair, New Zealand can register its commitment to work with key donors and Pacific governments to address their priorities to reduce reliance on imported fuel and strengthen resilience to better prepare for future shocks.

PACER Plus

8. PACER Plus entered into force on 13 December 2020. Parties to the Agreement are Australia, Cook Islands, Kiribati, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. Naoero has signed but not ratified.

9. s6(b)(i)

noting the agreement safeguards the interests of small Pacific Island country economies and takes a flexible approach for economic transition. s6(a)

10. Countries that have joined PACER Plus have seen tangible benefits:

- PACER Plus provides exporters with market access to economies with a combined GDP of US$2 trillion and 34 million consumers;
- Since PACER Plus entered into force, New Zealand's trade with PACER Plus partners (excluding Australia) has grown 40%, from NZ$1.3 billion to NZ$1.8 billion (as of March 2026);
- More Pacific exporters have met New Zealand (and Australian) import standards;
- Consumers and businesses have benefited from measurable improvements in trade facilitation, including reduced clearance times (e.g. Niue's process cut from one week to under 48 hours) and increased revenue collection; and
- Development of intra-Pacific labour mobility between members.

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11. At the November 2025 Ministerial meeting in Honiara, New Zealand and Australia announced a further NZ$37.5 million for the PACER Plus Development and Economic Cooperation Work Programme Phase II (July 2026-December 2030), which supports Pacific countries to implement the agreement.

Regional Labour Mobility

12. New Zealand attended the inaugural Labour Ministers Meeting hosted by Fiji in May, as an important first step in giving effect to Leaders 2025 Forum Communiqué, which recognised calls for a dedicated Meeting and agreed it be considered alongside the Review of Regional Architecture. s6(a)

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Regional Environmental Issues

Key Objective

- Re-affirm New Zealand's commitment to supporting Pacific leadership on climate and ocean ambition and resilience.

What might others want?

The upcoming (Fiji- and Tuvalu-hosted) Pre-COP in October and COP31 in November are major priorities for Pacific Island countries and Australia. A 100% renewable energy goal for the region is a priority for Palau's President Whipps. Palau is promoting the Leaders Declaration on Climate Action, and Tuvalu the Climate and Gender Pact. s6(a)

Key Messages

- New Zealand welcomes Australia's close partnering with Pacific Islands Forum members ahead of the Pacific Pre-COP, and Fiji and Tuvalu's hosting.
- The Pre-COP in Fiji and special Leaders event in Tuvalu in October are important opportunities for the world to see the impacts of climate change in the Pacific, to highlight Pacific leadership and seek funding for Pacific climate and ocean priorities.
- New Zealand is committed to supporting Pacific priorities, including seeking further pledges to capitalise the Pacific Resilience Facility; promoting renewable energy initiatives; and showcasing the Pacific's Ocean leadership.
- New Zealand supports the PIF Leaders Ocean Statement. We are working with partners on opportunities to enhance access to ocean finance.
- New Zealand has been actively working with fellow PIF members to promote regional positions on sea-level rise, including in a current UN political declaration negotiation.

Background

1. Pacific countries are determined to bring a substantial climate agenda to Pre-COP and COP31. Minister Watts attended the July Pacific Climate Ministers Talanoa that endorsed a wide-ranging package of initiatives in four agreed priority areas: keeping 1.5 within reach (including a focus on renewable energy), improving accessibility of climate finance, elevating the ocean-climate nexus, and amplifying Pacific leadership (including strengthening the region's global climate advocacy). Palau will have hosted a Leaders Ascent Dialogue on Tuesday 1 September, a preparatory event linked to the Pre-COP with a focus on renewable energy investment and ocean-climate action.

2. As well as taking stock of preparations for Pre-COP, Leaders will be asked to endorse specific oceans and climate initiatives.

3. New Zealand supports the PIF Leaders Ocean Statement (to be endorsed at the meeting), which will guide Pacific engagement in global events. Alongside blue economy activities, it sets out commitments to pilot ocean conservation financing instruments. Access to ocean finance continues to be a Pacific priority, with Niue showing leadership through innovative mechanisms.

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4. Palau's proposed Leaders Declaration on Climate Action has now been agreed by officials, including Tuvalu's Pact on Gender and Climate Action. Officials have streamlined the proposed Declaration and ensured alignment with agreed Forum and COP31 Pacific Partnership priorities. It is now ready for Leaders' consideration.

5. s6(a)

6. The Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) is a flagship regional initiative for community-level climate resilience projects. New Zealand has pledged NZ$20 million to capitalise the PRF, ratified the PRF treaty and hopes to make initial contributions in the current calendar year (from the existing IDC programme appropriation). s6(a)

7. In response to the recent global fuel crisis the region has reaffirmed support for a 100% renewable goal to support the region's transition away from fossil fuels;[2] and is developing a 'menu' of renewable energy initiatives for donors as part of the COP31 Pacific Partnership. New Zealand broadly welcomes these efforts. Our IDC Programme is currently delivering flagship renewable energy projects in Niue (now online and will meet 80% of Niue's power needs by the end of the year), Tokelau, and Vanuatu.

8. Two international environmental law initiatives are high priorities for Forum members:

   a. Current negotiations of a UN political declaration on **sea-level rise**. New Zealand is working to advance well-established regional positions through this process.[3]

   b. Implementation of the **Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction**. s9(2)(f)(iv)

9. Climate change is a key priority of New Zealand's development support in the Pacific. Having delivered a huge scale up in our climate finance from 2022 – 25 ($818m in the Pacific and $1.32 billion total), we are consolidating our support through 2026 – 29 (we currently project we will deliver $774m in the Pacific and $961m total). Our wide-ranging support includes climate-smart agriculture; water security; renewable energy; climate-resilient infrastructure; strengthening economic governance to attract climate finance; disaster risk reduction; biodiversity; climate mobility; and climate-smart ocean and fisheries.

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[1] The PRF Council (comprised of regional Finance Ministers) failed to appoint an independent board at its inaugural meeting in June, instead opening nominations for a politically-appointed interim board.
[2] At the 6th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting (PRETMM) in May 2026.
[3] Forum Leaders 2021 *Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-related Sea Level Rise*; and 2023 *Declaration on the Continuity of Statehood and the Protection of Persons Affected by Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise*.

Pacific Resilience Facility Pledges

Country	Pledged Currency	US$ (approx.)
Australia	AUD100 m	69,353,277
Canada	CAD7.5 m	5,485,192 (paid in)
China	USD0.5 m	500,000
France	EUR2 m	2,278,922
Germany	EUR5 m	5,697,304
Ireland	EUR3 m	3,418,519 (paid in)
Japan	JPY417 m	2,731,525 (paid in)
Marshall Islands	USD1 m	1,000,000
Naoero (Nauru)	AUD1 m	693,533 (partially paid in)
Netherlands	EUR1 m	1,139,483
New Zealand	NZD20 m	11,522,382
Saudia Arabia[1]	USD50 m	50,000,000
Solomon Islands	USD1 m	1,000,000
Taiwan	USD3 m	3,000,000
United States	USD20 m	20,000,000
Total		**177,820,137**
Target Capitalisation		500,000,000
Remaining		322,179,863

s6(b)(ii)

Other Contributions: Austria (€1 million) and Portugal (€1 million) have each contributed to support early PRF demonstration projects through on-granting arrangements, rather than contributing to the PRF capital base.

Expected Pledges: The UK (£9 million), Italy (€500,000), Norway (NOK 10 million, approximately NZ$1.8 million) s6(b)(i)
are expected to announce contributions to the PRF, subject to final approvals and due diligence processes.

s6(b)(i)

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BACKGROUND

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Republic of Palau

Bilateral relationship

Overview

1. You hosted President Whipps for dinner in Auckland in April 2026. Discussions focused on New Zealand's commitment to close cooperation with Palau as upcoming Troika partners and on Palau's priorities for hosting the PIF. The visit was significant as the first official visit by a Palauan President to New Zealand.

Geostrategic

2. s6(a)

3. s6(a)

International Development Cooperation

4. New Zealand expects to provide approximately NZ$13 million in development assistance to Palau over 2024–2027, supporting priorities including ocean management, climate resilience, and justice sector capability. This includes NZ$2.2 million in ADB-administered grant funding for economic resilience, announced during President Whipps' visit. It also includes New Zealand's contribution, alongside Australia, to support the transition of the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner (OPOC) to Palau, a key outcome of the Suva Agreement. In January 2026, Minister Peters announced a NZ$1.1 million, 12-month extension of this assistance. New Zealand has received requests s6(a) to contribute toward the Palau National Hospital, which is currently under consideration.

Political and Economic

5. Palau re-elected President Whipps to a second term in late 2024 and operates in a US-style bicameral political system. s6(a)

Palau identifies climate change as its principal long-term threat and remains an active international advocate on climate and ocean governance.

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Key facts

Geography/Demographics			
Land Area	466 sq km		
Population	17,695 (2024)		
Capital City	Ngerulmud [*Pron: ge-ROOL-mood*]		
Languages	Palauan/English		
Political			
Political System	Presidential representative republic in free association with the United States		
Government structure	The Olbiil Era Kelulau (OEK) is a bicameral legislature with a 15-member Senate and a 16-member House of Delegates, both serving four-year terms. The President and Vice President are elected separately by absolute majority, and the President appoints the Cabinet with Senate approval.		
Parties in government	No formal political parties		
Last election	5 November 2024		
Next elections	2028		
Economic (2023)			
Palau GDP	NZ$483 million		
	Palau's economy is dominated by tourism, which accounts for over 40% of GDP and is supported by its popularity with regional visitors from Asia. U.S. financial assistance under the Compact of Free Association is another key source of revenue.		
GDP growth	2.2% (annual)	**Inflation**	2.2% (annual)
New Zealand – Palau Two-way trade (year ended March 2026)			
Total two-way trade with Palau	NZ$3.57 million		
Total exports to Palau	NZ$2.83 million	**Total imports** from Palau	NZ$738,739
Services exported to Palau	NZ$1.56 million	**Services imported** from Palau	NZ$737,007
Goods exported to Palau	NZ$1.27 million	**Goods imported** from Palau	NZ$1,732
NZ services	Travel	**Palau services**	Travel
Goods products exported to Palau	Timber, Medical equipment, mechanical machinery, Dairy, pharmaceuticals	**Goods products** imported from Palau	Furniture

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New Zealand in the Pacific – International Development Cooperation (IDC) Programme overview

Key Points

- In 2025/26, New Zealand spent $638 million of IDC funding in the Pacific – 67% of total IDC expenditure ($956 million).
- A key focus was on taking a more strategic and deliberate approach to collaboration and coordination with Australia, and other likeminded partners, on shared Pacific priorities.

Background

1. New Zealand's international development cooperation (IDC) is an integral pillar of our foreign policy. It is a vehicle for advancing bilateral, regional, and multilateral interests; and reflects our network of international relationships and commitments.

2. New Zealand's primary development focus is on the Pacific. We have committed to provide at least 60 percent of total IDC to the region. For the 2024-27 funding triennium, we have a target of $1.92 billion for the Pacific (62% of total IDC).

3. We work with a range of partners, and prioritise investments that support economic and social resilience, good governance and democratic institutions; climate adaptation, and security. We have also increased support to address Pacific disaster preparedness and response.

4. With Australia, we are taking a more strategic approach to working with other development partners in the Pacific region, harmonising and leveraging investment wherever possible, while also taking into account the capacity constraints of Pacific partners. With global partners, we consistently advocate for approaches that advance Pacific priorities, are consistent with established regional practices, and support existing regional institutions. New Zealand is guided by, and supports implementation of, the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

5. Prior to, and over the course of, the 2024-27 triennium, significant shifts have occurred in the global development and operating context for IDC Programme delivery. Globally, the trend of increasing official development assistance (ODA) that peaked post COVID-19, has reversed:

   - ODA from Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members declined by 23 percent to US$174 billion—the largest annual decrease on record. ODA levels are projected to decline further in 2026.
   - Across OECD DAC members, the average ODA commitment fell from 0.37% of GNI in 2023 to 0.26% of GNI in 2025. The international target is for 0.70% of GNI.

6. To date, the Pacific has been largely insulated from these cuts. s9(2)(g)(i)

7. In 2024/25, the Ministry undertook a line-by-line review of the IDC Programme. The review confirmed that the Programme is largely aligned to the Government's priorities for the Pacific, while providing recommendations for a more streamlined and targeted Programme.

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Examples of IDC achievements across the Pacific in 2025/26

- Over 530,000 people were supported to improve their livelihoods.
- Over 500,000 people benefitted from activities that aim to increase resilience to climate change and environmental degradation.
- Over 270,000 people benefitted from sexual and reproductive health service.
- Over 13,000 people received training or capability-building support in governance
- Over 4,450 people received training or capability-building support in infrastructure
- Over 4,350 health workers received training or capability-building support in health
- Over 4,100 people received training or capability-building support in fisheries and oceans
- A regional stockpile of 65,000 measles vaccine doses was established in Fiji, reducing reliance on lengthy procurement and shipping; and allowing for catch-up immunisation activities in Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, and Kiribati.
- Communities in Tokelau gained an additional 520,000 litres of water storage capacity.
- Communities in Naoero gained an additional 300,000 litres of water storage capacity.
- Over 140 Emergency Medical Team personnel were trained across Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.
- More than 15,000 people travel to New Zealand from the Pacific under the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme, resulting in over NZ$116 million in annual remittances. Additionally, the RSE Training Programme delivered training courses to 1,700 RSE workers, expanding into agricultural skills and pathways for formal recognition of training.
- 412 Pacific scholars completed their Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship Programme studies and training programmes – across tertiary studies, and vocational short-term training programmes.
- $109.8 million was spent on Aid for Trade (17% of total IDC in the Pacific), supporting Pacific countries and businesses to access international markets, grow exports, attract investment and create jobs. One example is New Zealand's support for Fiji's kava sector, which has helped increase kava exports more than 700% in 15 years to more than FJD53 million in 2024/25, making kava Fiji's leading agricultural export.
- $5.7 million was provided in response to humanitarian crises and disasters in the Pacific. Assistance to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands following Tropical Cyclone Maila in April 2026 included emergency relief supplies, aerial damage assessments, NZDF logistical assistance to remote communities, and funding to NGO partner responses. A financial contribution assisted the Federated States of Micronesia's response to Super Typhoon Sinlaku in April 2026, and a 14-person New Zealand Medical Assistance Team was deployed to Samoa to support the response to a dengue fever outbreak.
- We invested $10.5 million in Pacific preparedness initiatives, including support for the Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme, preparedness missions to Niue and Tokelau, early warning information provided by NEMA and MetService, and technical assistance to Pacific national disaster management agencies.

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IDC expenditure across the Pacific in 2025/26

PACIFIC		Total expenditure in 2025-26	% of IDC in the Pacific
Polynesia	**$**	**247,790,145**	**38.9%**
Cook Islands	$	37,131,313	5.8%
French Polynesia/Wallis & Fatuna	$	713,024	0.1%
Niue	$	39,889,133	6.3%
Samoa	$	40,341,345	6.3%
Tokelau	$	51,331,340	8.1%
Tonga	$	47,697,841	7.5%
Tuvalu	$	28,464,030	4.5%
Polynesia regional	$	2,222,118	0.3%
Melanesia	**$**	**207,047,037**	**32.5%**
Fiji	$	47,067,751	7.4%
New Caledonia	$	886,432	0.1%
Papua New Guinea	$	53,294,309	8.4%
Solomon Islands	$	53,583,701	8.4%
Vanuatu	$	50,615,745	7.9%
Melanesia regional	$	1,599,098	0.3%
Micronesia	**$**	**57,977,777**	**9.1%**
Kiribati	$	31,764,778	5.0%
Republic of Marshall Islands	$	7,578,558	1.2%
Federated States of Micronesia	$	3,730,102	0.6%
Nauru	$	8,552,244	1.3%
Palau	$	5,751,720	0.9%
Micronesia regional	$	600,375	0.1%
Pacific regional	**$**	**124,796,024**	**19.6%**
Total IDC expenditure in the Pacific	**$**	**637,610,984**	**66.7% of IDC**

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El Niño and New Zealand's humanitarian support

1. El Niño conditions are underway in the Pacific and are expected to intensify into one of the strongest events on record. El Niño conditions are expected to generate widespread but variable impacts across the Pacific and Southeast Asia including more intense cyclones and droughts. El Niño 2026-2027 is occurring alongside intensifying climate change impacts and the current global fuel crisis and the war in Ukraine, which have already disrupted food production and availability, and raised the price of key agricultural inputs.

2. The 2015-16 El Niño was one of the strongest on record and had significant impacts across the Pacific. In Papua New Guinea alone, estimated 1.47 million people were impacted, with approximately 162,000 people facing extreme food shortages and requiring urgent food assistance.

Approved Anticipatory Action Approach

3. To mitigate the worst impacts of El Niño 26-27, the Ministry has approved an anticipatory action approach for the Pacific (including Timor-Leste). This includes continuing development of a s9(2)(f)(iv) package of preparedness and early response measures that target water and food security, pre-positioned supplies, and anticipatory action to help communities prepare for drought conditions. We're also planning to increase our pre-positioned relief supplies in Auckland in advance of the season, ready for deployment to the Pacific.

Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme

4. New Zealand also supports a suite of activities across the Pacific that aim to strengthen preparedness to respond and recover from humanitarian events. This includes the Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme, a Pacific-led, multi-partner program supporting 14 Pacific Island countries and Timor- Leste. It will strengthen disaster preparedness and build resilience by enhancing sovereign capability to procure, store and manage essential humanitarian supplies (non-food items). Over eight years, the PHWP will cost NZ$108–130 million to construct warehouse facilities, procure supplies, and deliver capability building activities. New Zealand has contributed NZ$20 million. Recent progress has included the commissioning of the warehouse in Kiribati, warehouse site groundbreakings in Palau and FSM, and warehouse concept designs approved for Niue and Solomon Islands.

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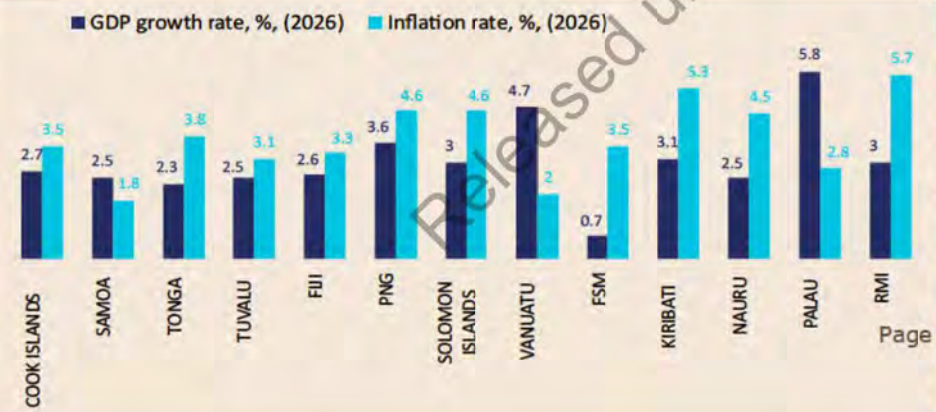
April 2026
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Economic and Fiscal Indicators in the Pacific

GDP, Debt, Budget, Exchange Rates Regimes, Inflation, Wealth Funds

Development Economy & Prosperity Division (DEVECO)

	Cook Islands	Niue	Tokelau	Samoa	Tonga	Tuvalu	Fiji	PNG	Solomon Islands	Vanuatu	FSM	Kiribati	Nauru	Palau	Marshall Islands	New Caledonia
GDP at current prices, $USm, 2026 (or latest date)	435.7[2]	28.7 (2024)[2]	10.2 (2020)[6]	1,380	720	70	6,350	34,400	1,840	1,400	520	400	200	380	340	8,548.92 (2024)[1]
GDP per capita, current $US, 2026 (or latest)	14,754 (2023)[2]	17,109 (2024)[2]	4,722 (2020)[6]	6,454	7,238	6,581	6,801	2,631	2,257	4,082	5,513	3,051	16,052	21,570	9,677	29.213.2 (2024)[1]
GDP growth, %, 2025	4.0	2.0	N/A	4.2	2.5	2.7	3.0	4.7	3.6	3.8	1.1	4.3	2.6	6.9	2.5	...
GDP growth, % 2026 (estimate)	2.7	2.5	N/A	2.0	2.3	2.5	2.6	3.6	3.0	4.7	0.7	3.1	2.5	5.8	3.0	...
GDP growth, % 2027 (forecast)	3.0	2.5	N/A	3.0	2.3	2.4	2.5	3.4	3.4	3.9	1.0	2.6	2.5	3.6	2.6	...
Current account balance as % of GDP, 2025 or latest date	5.1 (2023)	N/A	N/A	5.7	-3.6	12.5	-7.8	20.7	-4.2 (2024)	-15.2 (2024)	3.1 (2024)	-0.6	2.7	-19.8 (2024)	21.0 (2024)	-7.5 (2016)[1]
Fiscal surplus/deficit as % of GDP, 2025	4.9	0.2	N/A	4.7	4.8	-3.7	-2.4	-2.6	...	...	1.8	0.5	16.9	3.1	1.1	...
Public debt as % of GDP, 2025	...	No debt	No debt	21.2	27.4	3.6	78.7	52.1	28.7	40.9	8.9	8.0	14.6	62.3	11.8	...
IMF/WB debt risk rating (2025 or date last reviewed)	Not IMF Member	Not IMF Member	Not IMF member	Moderate (2024)	High	High	Moderate (Mar 2024)[3]	High	Moderate	High	Moderate (2024)	High (2024)	Low (Nov 2023)[3]	Moderate (July 2024)[3]	Moderate	Not IMF member
Exchange rate regime	Uses NZD	Uses NZD	Uses NZD	Currency basket (NZD, AUD, USD, EUR)	Currency basket (USD, AUD, NZD, FJD)	Uses AUD	Currency basket (AUD, JPY, NZD, USD,EUR)	Managed floating	Currency basket (USD, AUD, NZD)	Managed floating	Uses USD	Uses AUD	Uses AUD	Uses USD	Uses USD	Uses CPF franc (pegged to the Euro)
Inflation rate, %, 2025	2.0	2.3	N/A	1.9	2.9	2.8	-1.4	4.4	3.4	0.7	3.9	6.5	6.1	0.2	5.6	N/A?
Inflation rate, %, 2026 (estimate)	3.5	3.4	N/A	1.8	3.8	3.1	3.3	4.6	4.5	2.0	3.5	5.3	4.5	2.8	5.7	N/A?
Total reserves (includes gold, current $USm) 2025 (or latest)[4]	57.5	N/A	N/A	568	409	128	1,684	3,616	683 (2024)	663	497 (2021)	116 (2022)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



Sovereign Wealth Funds in the Pacific[5]

Pacific Country Sovereign Fund Name and Year Established	Funding Sources	Fund Size in million $USm in 2025 (or latest)	Fund as a % of GDP
Intergenerational Trust Fund for the People of the Republic of Nauru (2015)	Foreign donors and Government of Nauru	$263	131%
Kiribati Revenue Equalization Reserve Fund (1956)	Originally set up with Mineral royalties (phosphate) and now funded primarily by fisheries receipts	$1,053	328%
Niue International Trust Fund (2006)	Foreign donors and Island government revenues	$44.6	269%
Tokelau International Trust Fund (2000)	Foreign donors	$74	725%
Tuvalu Trust Fund (1987)	Foreign donors, internet domain licensing and other island government revenues	$163	281%

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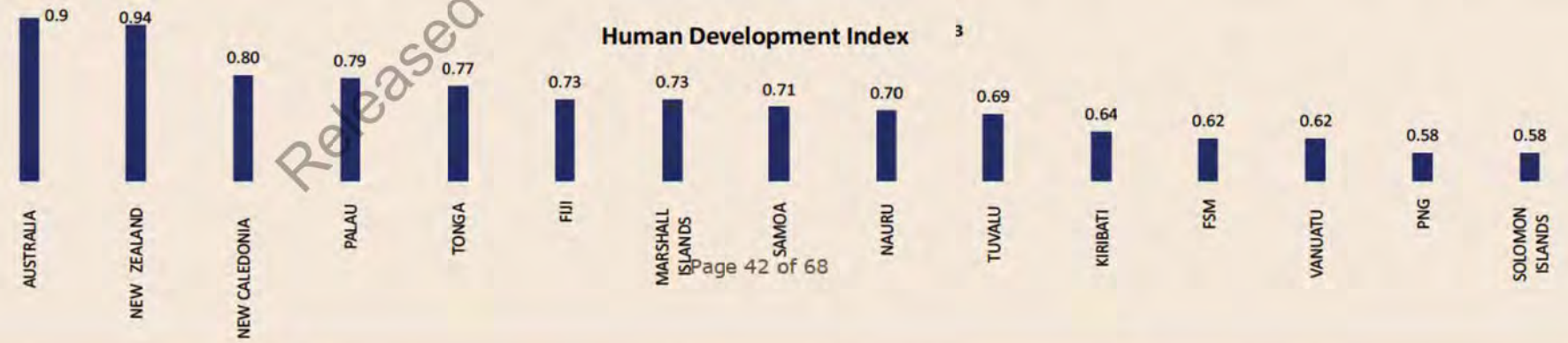
April 2026
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Demographic and Socio-Economic Indicators in the Pacific

Population, Labour Market, Remittances, Diaspora in New Zealand, Human Development Index

Development Economy & Prosperity Division (DEVECO)

	Cook Islands	Niue	Tokelau	Samoa	Tonga	Tuvalu	Fiji	PNG	Solomon Islands	Vanuatu	FSM	Kiribati	Nauru	Palau	Marshall Islands	New Caledonia
Total resident population in '000 in 2024 (or latest date)	24.5	1.7	1.6 (2019)	210.7	100	10	883	12,918	783	335	105	125.4	12	18	40	289.9
Annual population growth in % as of 2024 (or latest date)	13.4%	-0.4%	N/A	1.0%	-0.1%	-0.9%	-0.1%	3.1%	1.9%	4.1%	0.2%	1.6%	0.8%	1.2%	-2.2%	1%
Total Labour Force in '000 (date)	8.07 (2023)[4]	0.87 (2022)	0.423 (2022)	56 (2022)	29 (2023)	3.13 (2022)	315 (2024)	3660 (2024)[4]	292 (2019)[4]	75.92 (2020)	38.15 (2014)	41.16 (2023)	4.8 (2021)	9.302 (2023)	13.32 (2022)	123.15 (2023)
Labour force participation % (date)	79.75 (2023)[4]	71.65 (2022)	51.82 (2022)	46.8 (2022)	53.85 (2023)	47.28 (2022)	58.82 (2024)	52 (2024)[4]	55.4 (2019)[4]	44.20 (2020)	59.16 (2014)	56.12 (2023)	35.90 (2024)	74.49 (2023)	50.46 (2021)	67.72 (2023)
Unemployment rate in % (date)	1.2 (2021)[4]	5.9 (2022)[4]	N/A	3.23 (2022)	1.12 (2023)	4.76 (2022)	3.87 (2024)	2.7 (2024)[4]	7.9 (2019)[4]	2.80 (2020)	6.05 (2014)	1.91 (2023)	5.0 (2021)[4]	1.91 (2023)	7.26 (2021)	6.98 (2023)
Remittances, Outflows in $USm , 2023 (or latest date) [1]	N/A	N/A	N/A	32.5	27.8	2.22 (2023)	15.1	153 (2021)	56.6	21.8 (2023)	17.33 (2014)	1.06	26.18	15.1 (2023)	13.5	59.86 (2016)
Remittances, Inflows, $USm, 2023 or latest	N/A	N/A	N/A	264.87	222	2.0	500.0	3.0	84.55	144.96 (2023)	23.34 (2014)	15.0	2.24	1.95 (2023)	34.45	621.06 (2016)
Remittances, Inflows, % of GDP, 2026 or latest	N/A	N/A	N/A	19.9	30.83	2.86	7.9	0.01	4.6	10.35 (2022)	4.5 (2014)	3.8	1.1	0.5 (2023)	10.1	7.1 (2015)
Self-identified population residing in NZ, 2023	94,176	34,944	9,822	213,069	97,824	6,585	25,038	1,290	924	1,161	..	4,659	120	..	..	..
Median age (2025)	37	37	28	20	21	25	28	23	21	21	24	23	21	39	21	35
Fertility rate (latest)	2.7 (2019)	3 (2017)	3.8 (2016)	3.8 (2016)	3.1 (2020)	3.4 (2016)	2.8 (2019)	4.2 (2018)	4.4 (2015)	4.2 (2013)	3.2 (2015)	3.3 (2019)	3.9 (2017)	2.2 (2018)	2.7 (2016)	2.0 (2017)



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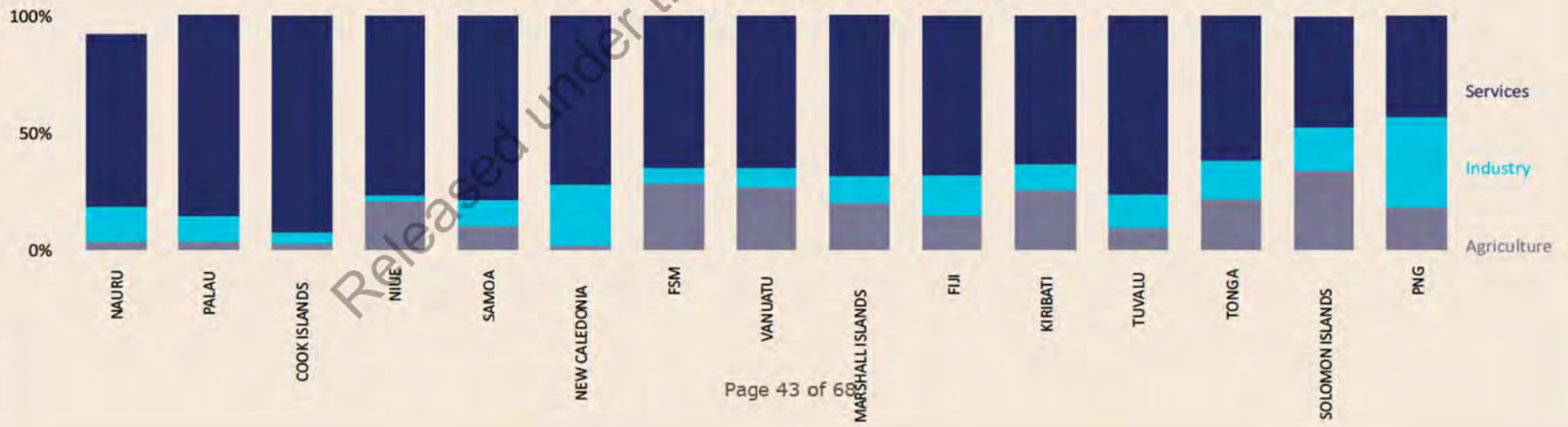
Aid and Trade Indicators

Tourism, Aid, Trade

Development Economy & Prosperity Division (DEVECO)

	Cook Islands	Niue	Tokelau	Samoa	Tonga	Tuvalu	Fiji	PNG	Solomon Islands	Vanuatu	FSM	Kiribati	Nauru	Palau	Marshall Islands	New Caledonia
Tourism receipts, % GDP (2019 , or latest) [1]	68% (2022)	28%	N/A	25%	11%	6%	9.9% (2022)	1%	5%	8%	7%	2%	~0%	38%	6%	4%
Trade as % of GDP (2024 or latest) [2]	129 (2018)	119 (2018)	N/A	79.52	79.62	145 (2018)	104 (2018)	131.08	111.35	63.60	98.42	107.60	165.85	106.70	123.81	40.37
Per capita aid from all sources $US, 2019-2023 average [4]	2530	16137	...	748	1680	6597	568	144	414	620	1643	853	3916	4615	3643	6,355
NZ aid per capita $US, 2019-2023 average [5]	1,194	13,204	...	120	163	728	37	2	33	61	5.6	128	247	42	21	...
Total ODA and Other Official Flows(spent), $USm, (2019-2023 average) [4]	62(2019)	27	...	157	168	66	501	1855	323	207	172	107	47	83	145	...
Foreign Aid as a % of GDP (latest year) [4]	14%	95.6%	...	11.4%	23.3%	92.2%	7.9%	5.4%	17.6%	14.8%	33.1%	26.8%	23.5%	21.9%	42.9%	18%

Structure of Output as % of GDP (2024 or latest data)



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BILATERAL MEETINGS

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Priority Bilateral Engagements Overview

1. It will be important to use your limited time in Palau to build strong Leader-level relationships ahead of our hosting and Troika membership. s9(2)(f)(iv)

2. Alongside these conversations, we suggest you target engagements in the sidelines of the Leaders Dinner, Retreat and Closing Ceremony s6(a)

Tokelau's exclusion from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement Vessel Day Scheme (PNA VDS)

3. s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(j)

This will significantly reduce Tokelau's fisheries revenue.

4. New Zealand is actively supporting Tokelau's efforts to seek re-admission to the PNA Vessel Day Scheme. s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(j)

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Breakfast with Fijian Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka

Time and Date: 6:45am, Thursday 3 September
Location: Palau Pacific



Hon Sitiveni Rabuka [*pron.* See-teh-veh-knee Ram-boo-kah] became Fiji's Prime Minister for the second time in December 2022. PM Rabuka heads up the People's Alliance Party and leads a three-way Coalition Government. Fiji's next election is due by 6 February 2027 (date yet to be set), with a referendum on constitutional reform being considered before then.

You last spoke to PM Rabuka on 22 June 2026 s6(a), s6(b)(i)

You last met in person at the 2025 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Honiara. s9(2)(a)

Key Objectives

- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

Key Messages

- s6(a)
- Celebrate the signing of the refreshed Duavata Partnership in July.
- Note our focus on the work needed to achieve NZ$2 billion in two-way trade by 2030.
- s6(a)
- s6(b)(i)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Background

Bilateral engagement – Duavata partnership, s6(b)(i) *and elections*

1. In June 2024, you and PM Rabuka committed to refreshing the New Zealand - Fiji Duavata Partnership, which guides the bilateral relationship including our development programme. Due to scheduling challenges, you agreed that the Partnership could be signed by Foreign Ministers, which occurred when Foreign Affairs Minister Sakiasi Ditoka visited New Zealand on 15 July 2026 to observe the FIT-P ministerial meeting.

2. s6(b)(i)

3. s6(a)

s6(a)

4. s6(a)

5. s6(a)

6. s6(a)

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Trade issues

7. Foreign Minister Ditoka attended the FIT-P Ministerial Meeting in July, during which he met with Minister McClay. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

s6(a), s6(b)(i)

8. Most recent statistics (from March 2026) currently value New Zealand-Fiji two-way trade at NZ$1.45 billion, a 3.6% growth from the previous year. This indicates there is further work to do to increase two-way trade and meet your and PM Rabuka's goal of NZ$2 billion of two-way trade by 2030. s6(a)

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Papua New Guinea: Prime Minister Hon James Marape (TBC)

Time and Date: TBC
Location: TBC



Hon James Marape has been Prime Minister since 2019, after previously serving as Finance Minister. The son of a pastor, Marape is a devoted Seventh-day Adventist and a keen golfer.

Prime Minister Marape visited New Zealand twice in 2025 and you last met in November 2025 during a refuelling stop in Port Moresby after the APEC Leaders Meeting in South Korea.

Key Objectives

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

Key Messages

- Note New Zealand welcomes the Parties' (Papua New Guinea Government and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville) endorsement of the "Melanesian Framework" and Joint Consultations Report on 5 August. We strongly support a path where the Parties remain engaged. New Zealand will continue to support these efforts.
- Seek views on the parliamentary process ahead for Bougainville's independence referendum, s6(a)
- New Zealand is deeply concerned by Tokelau's exclusion from the PNA VDS. s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(ii), s9(2)(j)
- [*If time allows*]: Highlight the strong momentum in the bilateral relationship. Since your August 2025 visit to Port Moresby, we have advanced several key commitments, including expanding our small business programme into the Highlands, supporting PNG trade negotiators, strengthening defence cooperation and deepening policing ties with the RPNGC.
- [*If time allows*]: Note New Zealand concern about the potential humanitarian impacts of a severe El Niño weather event, which is forecast to be one of the strongest on record. Note we are keen to discuss how partners can best support PNG's response efforts.

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Background

Navigating Bougainville's future political status

9. s6(a)

10. s6(a)

11. s6(a)

12. s6(a)

The Bilateral Relationship: focused on delivery

13. New Zealand and Papua New Guinea are working closely to implement the PNG-NZ Statement of Partnership, signed in 2025. The statement provides a framework for deepening cooperation across shared priorities and reflects the commitment to delivering practical outcomes. Officials aim to meet in High Level Consultations, Security Dialogues, Development Talks and Economic and Trade meetings by the end of the year.

PNG highly vulnerable to El Niño

14. Papua New Guinea is currently facing increased risk of drought as El Niño conditions develop. The impact is likely to intensify through late 2026 and early 2027. Prolonged dry conditions, especially in the highlands, could affect food security, water supplies, livelihoods and security. The government is in the early stages of preparedness and contingency planning in coordination with international partners. Officials are considering ways of supporting PNG's preparedness efforts.

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s6(a) PULL ASIDE ENGAGEMENTS

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The Federated States of Micronesia: President Wesley Simina



President Wesley Simina [pron: *see-me-nah*] is a long-standing figure in FSM politics and was sworn in as President in May 2023. Climate change is a key focus for Simina's foreign policy agenda. Simina's domestic policy is focused on national unity – given FSM is made up of four geographically and culturally distinct states. Prior to becoming President, Simina served as Speaker of the FSM Congress from 2015 to 2023 and as Governor of Chuuk State from 2005 to 2011.

You both attended PIF last year in Solomon Islands.

Objectives:

- Build relationship with Simina ahead of New Zealand's PIF hosting.
- Encourage FSM to support Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Vessel Day Scheme (VDS).

Key Messages:

- It is encouraging to see the bilateral relationship continue to deepen and grow. Highlight New Zealand's support for early childhood development and safe drinking water in FSM in partnership with UNICEF. New Zealand also provides technical assistance to National Oceanic Resource Management Authority to strengthen marine resource management and combat illegal fishing.
- Acknowledge the pre-eminent threat climate change poses for FSM. Note New Zealand is exploring ways to support FSM's climate adaptation. Seek President Simina's views on his priorities.
- New Zealand is deeply concerned by Tokelau's exclusion from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement Vessel Day Scheme (PNA VDS). s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(ii), s9(2)(j)

[*If raised*]

- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Kiribati: President Taneti Maamau



President Maamau is serving his third term as Kiribati President, after being re-elected in 2024. s6(a), s9(2)(a)

During that visit, Minister Peters and Kiribati Vice President Teuea Toatu signed the Te Mauri Dialogue, s6(a)

In his capacity as Kiribati's Foreign Affairs Minister, he attended the PIF Foreign Ministers Meeting virtually. s6(a)

You last met Maamau at the 2025 PIF Leaders Meeting in Honiara.

Objectives:

- Build relationship with Maamau, s6(a)
- Encourage Kiribati to support Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Vessel Day Scheme (VDS).

Key Messages:

- Welcome the efforts underway to implement the Te Mauri Dialogue, including scheduling our senior officials to meet through High Level Consultations later this year.
- Note bilateral cooperation on fisheries, health, vocational training and labour mobility, including the design of a NZ$20 million Health Sector Support Programme 2026-2032.
- Thank President Maamau for Kiribati's leadership on the joint unexploded ordnance disposal operation currently being supported by NZDF in Betio [Be-so].
- Welcome the PIFS Sub-Regional Office for Micronesia's opening in Kiribati. s6(a)
- New Zealand is deeply concerned by Tokelau's exclusion from the PNA VDS. s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(ii), s9(2)(j)
- s6(a)

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Palau: President Surangel Whipps Jr



President Surangel Whipps Jr has been President of Palau since 2020. He was re-elected in 2024 for a second four-year term. Constitutionally, he will not be eligible to run for the Presidency again in the 2028 election. Whipps continues to hold the finance and education portfolios while his nominations are held up in the Senate. Prior to his Presidency, Whipps served two terms as a Senator in the Palau National Congress.

Before entering politics, Whipps served as the CEO and President of his family business, Surangel and Sons Company. He expanded the family business from a single store to a nationwide enterprise that employs over 600 people. You last met when hosting President Whipps for dinner in Auckland in April.

Objectives:

- Further build your relationship with Whipps Jr ahead of joining him on the PIF Troika.
- Encourage Palau to support Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Vessel Day Scheme (VDS).

Key Messages:

- Congratulate Palau for hosting the Pacific Islands Forum and note that you look forward to working alongside Palau on the Troika.
- Seek a readout on President Whipps' Troika experience. How can New Zealand best add value during our term?
- s6(a)

- Note the importance of President Whipps' visit to New Zealand in April, the first official visit by a Palauan President, reflecting the growing strength of the relationship.
- Following the visit New Zealand disbursed NZ$2.2 million as grant funding to support economic reform in Palau, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank. Welcome Palau's completion of the policy reforms. Reiterate our ongoing desire to support Palau in this space.
- Note our joint Maritime interests and refer to the Royal New Zealand Air Force's aerial patrol in Palau's EEZ soon after his visit. We continue to look for opportunities to counter illegal fishing and trans-national crime.
- Welcome the launch of Palau's Sustainable Ocean Policy and Plan on 12 August and express New Zealand's pleasure in having supported its development.
- [*If raised*] Palau Hospital: s6(a)

  We are looking at ways in which New Zealand can support the project as it progresses.

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Solomon Islands: Prime Minister Matthew Wale



Hon Matthew Wale ["Wa-leh"] has been Prime Minister of Solomon Islands since 15 May 2026. As Opposition Leader, he was a prominent and at times outspoken critic of successive governments. Wale was educated at Christ's College in Christchurch and studied accounting and finance at Victoria University of Wellington. He is fond of Rugby Union and played while at Christ's.

You last met Wale during his visit to New Zealand in June this year.

Objectives:

- Discuss Wale's regional security treaty proposal and Troika membership.
- Encourage Solomon Islands to support Tokelau's efforts to be readmitted to the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Vessel Day Scheme (VDS).

Key Messages:

- s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- Seek an update on Wale's proposed regional security treaty. s6(a)
- Note that officials are engaging directly with Solomon Islands' Labour Mobility Unit to progress enhanced capacity support, which could include a Country Liaison Officer in New Zealand to support growth in Solomon Islands RSE worker numbers.
- New Zealand is deeply concerned by Tokelau's exclusion from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement Vessel Day Scheme (PNA VDS).
  s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(ii), s9(2)(j)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

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Tonga: Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua



Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua [*pron. Faka-fah-nu-ah*] is the Prime Minister of Tonga and, Minister of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications; Minister of Police, Fire, Emergency Services and Prisons; and Acting Finance Minister.

You last met Lord Fakafanua in March 2026 during the Pacific Mission in Tonga.

Objectives:

- s6(a)

Key Messages:

- Acknowledge Tonga's leadership in the Pacific Islands Forum as part of the current Troika which we hope to carry forward when New Zealand assumes a seat on the Troika in Tonga's place as host in 2027.
- s6(a)

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OTHER PIF LEADER BIOGRAPHIES

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Australia: Prime Minister Anthony Albanese



Anthony Albanese was re-elected for a second three-year term on 3 May 2025, becoming the first Prime Minister since John Howard to lead his party to consecutive election victories. With such a resounding mandate, much of Albanese's first-term Cabinet remain in their roles. Albanese has been the leader of the Australian Labor Party since 2019 and the MP for the NSW division of Grayndler since 1996. He was born in Sydney and studied economics at the University of Sydney. He is married to Jodie Haydon, and has one son from his previous marriage.

You last met in Noosa in June for the annual Australia-New Zealand Leaders Meeting.

Key Messages:

- Reiterate New Zealand's interest in exploring joining the Ocean of Peace Alliance s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

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Cook Islands: Prime Minister Hon Mark Brown



Preliminary results of the 12 August Cook Islands election show Hon Mark Brown is very likely to be re-elected as Prime Minister of the Cook Islands Government for the third time. After a post-election deal with three independent MPs from Mangaia, his Cook Islands Party is on track to win two thirds of the seats in Parliament.

Ministerial portfolios have not yet been confirmed. However, prior to the election, Brown held Ministerial responsibilities for Finance and Economic Management, Attorney General, Public Service Commission, Police, Seabed Minerals Authority, Tourism, Energy and Renewable Energy, Outer Island Special Projects, and Telecommunications.

You recently met Prime Minister Brown at the Realm Leaders Meeting on 28 August in Auckland.

Key Messages:

- Ask about PM Brown's priorities for his next term as Prime Minister.
- Exchange views on the Realm Leaders Meeting held on 28 August, immediately prior to the PIF Leaders Meeting.
- Welcome the normalisation of the relationship after a challenging period, and note our focus is now on a defence and security uplift to deliver on the Declaration on Defence and Security that the New Zealand and Cook Islands signed on 1 April.
- s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

- *Subject to Penrhyn wharf project announcement:* Welcome the announcement of a joint New Zealand-United States investment in the upgrade of Penrhyn Wharf, with New Zealand as implementing partner. We look forward to working with the Cook Islands Government to make it a success.

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French Polynesia: President Moetai Brotherson



Moetai Brotherson was elected President of the Government of French Polynesia in May 2023 for a term of five years. He speaks English.

In April 2026, a major split occurred in the pro-independence Tāvini Huira'atira Party, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

The break became formal in July when Brotherson left Tavini to become leader of the breakaway group A Fano Tia ("Stay the Course"). s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

You last met Brotherson at the 2025 PIF Leaders Meeting in Honiara.

Key Messages:

- Enquire about the state of French Polynesian politics s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)
- Note our warm bilateral relationship and enhanced development cooperation offering for French Polynesia, with eligibility from 2026 for up to three Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship Programme postgraduate scholarships, and vocational training opportunities, work placements and English language training for young people.
- Exchange views on regional challenges, and how to develop resilient, adaptable communities, including through greater regional integration. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

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Naoero (Nauru): President David Adeang



His Excellency President David Adeang ["ah-dee-yung"] was re-elected as President following Naoero's October 2025 general election. Adeang has served as President since October 2023 and has been a Member of Parliament since 2001.

He has held several senior ministerial portfolios, including finance and justice, and is one of Naoero's most experienced political figures.

You previously hosted President Adeang at a meeting in Auckland in February 2024.

Key Messages:

- Welcome the country's formal name-change to Naoero ("NOW-ero") in late June 2026, recognising the nation's heritage and cultural identity.
- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Camilla Solomon as Naoero's first High Commissioner to New Zealand in 2025, cross-accredited from Canberra. It is encouraging to see the bilateral relationship continue to deepen and grow.
- s6(a)
- New Zealand is deeply concerned by Tokelau's exclusion from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement Vessel Day Scheme (PNA VDS). s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(ii), s9(2)(j)
- Reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to supporting Naoero's long-term economic resilience. Highlight New Zealand's contribution of NZ$1 million annually (2019–2034) to the Naoero Intergenerational Trust Fund. As of June 2026, the Fund held assets of approximately AUD$479 million.

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New Caledonia: Member of Government for Mines and Energy, Alcide Ponga



Alcide Ponga ["pon-ga"] was appointed member of Government responsible for Mines and Energy on 5 August 2026 following long-overdue provincial (territorial) elections in June 2026. He is the immediate former President of the Government of New Caledonia (January 2025 until 31 July 2026). s9(2)(g)(i)

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Ponga has extensive experience in New Caledonia's nickel mining industry, including as a senior executive at Koniambo Nickel 2010–2024. He is the first Kanak to lead the Rassemblement party, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

You last met Ponga at the 2025 PIF Leaders Meeting in Honiara.

Key Messages:

- Welcome the election of the 19th Government of New Caledonia and congratulate Ponga on his appointment as Minister of Mines and Energy. The new government will benefit from his experience as a former President of Government and as an industry expert.
- Note New Zealand has a strong interest in enduring peace and stability in New Caledonia. s6(a)
- Invite Ponga's views on the new government's early priorities in addressing the territory's economic and social challenges.
- Reiterate New Zealand's desire to be a helpful and constructive partner for New Caledonia and France, s6(a)
- The July 2025 New Caledonia Study Tour to learn more about New Zealand's economic development (including in Māori communities) generated a range of activities and plans among participating delegates. New Zealand is now working on related initiatives on enterprise education for New Caledonian youth, especially those from rural and customary areas.

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Niue: Prime Minister Dalton Tagelagi



Hon Dalton Tagelagi [*pron.* tah-ng-eh-lah-gee] was re-elected Prime Minister in May 2026. He won his village seat by one vote (111:110) and the Prime Minister vote 11:9. He is a Member of Niue's 19th General Assembly, representing Niue's most populous village constituency of Alofi South. Prime Minister Tagelagi was first elected Premier in June 2020 and re-elected with the title of Prime Minister in April 2023. You will have just hosted the Prime Minister at the inaugural Realm Leaders Meeting. You spoke to Tagelagi over the phone following his re-election in May 2026 and hosted him for the inaugural Annual Leaders Meeting and signing of the Political Declaration in Auckland, November 2025.

Key Messages:

- Seek Prime Minister Tagelagi's priorities for the term ahead. (Note Niue's budget of $83.4million recently passed with a $17.6million deficit).
- Acknowledge the success of the NZ-funded Renewable Energy project which will allow Niue to achieve approximately 80 percent of renewable energy generation by the end of 2026. Seek Tagelagi's views on the impacts of the fuel crisis. s6(a)
- Seek Prime Minister Tagelagi's reflections on the inaugural Realm Leaders Meeting. Acknowledge his initiative and leadership in advocating for the meeting, and for his role as co-chair of this meeting alongside New Zealand.
- Note the special ceremony that took place last week (week of 24 August) in Niue to hand over service memorial headstones for 39 Niue veterans who served in WWI. Niue's sacrifice was immense and recognition such as this reflects New Zealand's enduring gratitude.

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Republic of the Marshall Islands: President Dr Hilda Heine



President Dr Hilda Heine ["hi-nee"] was the first female President of RMI from 2016-2020 and was re-elected in 2024. s6(a)

She has an extensive background in education, including as Minister of Education, President of the College of the Marshall Islands, and Pro-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific. She was the first Marshallese person to earn a doctorate. You both attended PIF last year in Solomon Islands.

Key Messages:

- It is encouraging to see the bilateral relationship continue to deepen and grow. Highlight New Zealand's support to the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) on climate-induced loss and damage, and through technical assistance to the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA) to strengthen resource management and combat illegal fishing. Emphasise New Zealand's commitment to continuing support in these areas.
- Acknowledge the pre-eminent threat climate change poses for RMI. Note New Zealand is exploring ways to support RMI's climate adaptation. Seek President Heine's views on her priorities.
- Welcome the appointment of H.E. Junior Aini as RMI's first Ambassador to New Zealand in April 2025, cross-accredited from Suva.
- s6(a)

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Samoa: Deputy Prime Minister Hon. Mulipola Anarosa Ale-Molio'o



Hon. Mulipola [*Moo-lee-poh-lah*] Anarosa Ale-Molio'o took on the role of Deputy Prime Minister in March 2026, in addition to the Minister of Finance portfolio. Mulipola made history in 2021 as Samoa's first female Minister of Finance under former-PM Fiame's Government. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) and is one of two returning Cabinet Ministers after the FAST Party's election victory in 2025. She is an auditor and accountant by profession.

You last met Mulipola while in Apia during the Pacific Mission in March 2026.

s6(a)

Key Messages:

- Acknowledge the importance of the PIF and highlight Samoa as a founding member of the PIF plays an important role as a voice that upholds democracy, good governance, and a peaceful region.
- New Zealand looks forward to warmly welcoming Samoa and the rest of the PIF membership to New Zealand for our hosting of the PIF Leaders' Meeting in 2027, consistent with our longstanding cooperation in advancing Pacific regionalism.
- s6(a)
- s6(b)(i) Acknowledge Samoa's vulnerability to higher fuel prices which will flow through the economy and the risk of supply shocks down the track. New Zealand will continue to work closely with Samoa if they need technical or other support to help them get through the crisis.
- [*If raised – Manawanui*] Note that New Zealand is committed to working with Samoa to develop a response that addresses all matters related to Manawanui. Acknowledge discussions underway to review the range of options for dealing with the wreck.

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Tuvalu: Prime Minister Feleti Teo



Feleti Teo [*pron.* Fell-ety Te-oh] was unanimously selected as Prime Minister of Tuvalu on 26 February 2024. Teo spent the past 23 years in prominent positions in regional Pacific institutions, including as the Deputy Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum (2007-2013), and the Executive Director of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (2014-2023). Teo also served as Attorney General of Tuvalu from 1991-2000.

You last met during Teo's Guest of Government visit to New Zealand in March 2026, where you signed an updated Tuvalu-New Zealand Statement of Partnership which committed to consider an elevation in the relationship architecture in the lead up to marking 50 years of diplomatic relations in 2028.

Key Messages:

- We look forward to supporting Tuvalu to host a successful pre-COP special Leaders component. New Zealand has a C-130 aircraft on standby to assist with pre-COP logistics. This will likely include cargo transport between Nadi and Funafuti before and after the meeting. We are coordinating with Australia who are closely involved with planning efforts.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- New Zealand is deeply concerned by Tokelau's exclusion from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement Vessel Day Scheme (PNA VDS). s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(ii), s9(2)(j)
- s6(a)

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Vanuatu: Minister of Climate Change Hon. Ralph Regenvanu



Hon. Ralph Regenvanu ["*Ray-gen-vah-noo"]* is Vanuatu's Minister for Climate Change Adaptation, Energy, Environment, Geo-Hazards and Disaster Management. s6(a)

and enjoys informal engagements with foreign counterparts. s6(a)

He has championed Vanuatu's push for the International Court of Justice (ICJ) opinion on climate obligations and the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty initiative.

An anthropologist and artist, he has been a Member of Parliament since 2008 and has previously held the Foreign Affairs portfolio. s6(a)

s9(2)(a)

Minister Regenvanu is Vanuatu's Head of Delegation as Prime Minister Jotham Napat has competing domestic priorities.

Key Messages:

- Seek Vanuatu's priorities for the Forum, noting the importance New Zealand places on Vanuatu's contributions as a leader in the climate space.
- Congratulate Vanuatu on the ICJ AO General Assembly resolution. New Zealand was pleased to vote in favour of the resolution, and we commend Vanuatu on its strong advocacy on behalf of Pacific Island countries.
- Note the recent groundbreaking of the RESSET project in Tanna contributing to Vanuatu's ambition to eliminate the use of fossil fuels (RESSET is a large solar infrastructure project on Tanna and Efate Islands funded principally by New Zealand). Express interest in further practical cooperation.
- Note Vanuatu's efforts to deepen Melanesian cooperation, with the recent signature of MOUs with Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Seek views on how shared issues are being addressed through regional architecture.

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Tokelau: Ulu o Tokelau – Alapati Tavite (Associate Member)



Alapati Tavite [*pron.* Ahla-paati Ta-vitee] became Ulu o Tokelau for the second time in February 2026. This is a national titular head role that rotates annually between Tokelau's three Faipule and includes the foreign affairs, justice, and public service portfolios. As Faipule (Chief Representative) of Nukunonu Atoll, he also carries the national ministerial portfolios for finance and health.

Immediately prior to his initial election to the General Fono in 2023, Tavite was Deputy Director in Tokelau's Department of Health.

You met with the Ulu at the Realm Leaders Meeting on 28 August.

Key Messages:

- Congratulate the Ulu on Tokelau successfully hosting commemorations for the centenary of New Zealand's administration of Tokelau in July this year (attended by the Administrator of Tokelau and PM La'aulialemalietoa Leuatea Schmidt of Samoa).
- New Zealand remains very concerned about Tokelau's unfortunate removal from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Vessel Day Scheme and the extra budgetary pressures that this is creating. New Zealand remains committed to working alongside Tokelau to resolve this situation as soon as possible. We encourage the Ulu to make strong representations to PNA member leaders assuring them Tokelau meets the requirements to manage its fisheries in the PNA VDS.
- Acknowledge current challenges facing Tokelau with regard to transport frequency, and with fuel supply vulnerability. New Zealand officials are working closely with Tokelauan officials on options to build Tokelau's fuel reserves and storage capacity as well as the commissioning of a renewable energy solar power system to cut diesel dependence.

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Agenda item 4: Peace and Security (11:00am)

- We propose Leaders reaffirm an unwavering commitment to a nuclear-weapon free Pacific, especially given the inability in May of the five-yearly Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference to achieve an agreed outcome.
- Our region has shown leadership on nuclear disarmament issues for decades. In our view, Forum Leaders continue to have a role in reinforcing global cooperation on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, including though strong language in the 2026 Leader's Communique.
- This language would make clear Leaders' concern about increasing nuclear weapons stockpiles and capabilities, recall the deep impact of historical nuclear weapons testing on Pacific peoples and our environment, and reaffirm the region's commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as underpinning the global norm against nuclear weapons testing.
- s9(2)(f)(iv)

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New Zealand's position

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- s9(2)(f)(iv)

Roundtable on the Pacific Drive Towards 100% Renewables

Handling advice

- We recommend that you make an intervention, as appropriate following leaders/ministers.

Intervention

- Chair, Your Excellencies, New Zealand has long supported the Pacific's energy security ambitions and renewable energy targets. We are working in partnership with Governments of Niue, Tokelau and Vanuatu to expand solar power to help meet their ambitious renewable energy targets. With the UK [as you have heard] we have invested in the TIDES initiative which will scale commercially viable renewable energy investment in the Pacific region. Investment will initially be focused on the Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu, with the aim to expand to further national markets.
- We welcome the discussion today on how we can further accelerate Pacific renewables implementation and investment, building on discussions this year at the 6th **Pacific Regional Energy & Transport Ministers Meeting** (PRETMM). We welcome the **Pacific Renewable Energy Investment Prospectus** (PREIP), and the inclusion of innovative initiatives like TIDES. We welcome the progress towards establishing the important **Renewable Energy Commissioner** role.
- We support the work through the COP31 Pacific Partnership to also bring a strong focus on renewable energy deployment and electrification in our region to the upcoming Pre-COP in Fiji and Leaders' event in Tuvalu. This will be a valuable platform to showcase successful initiatives and catalyse renewables investment in our region.

Fuel Crisis & Regional Mapping & Vulnerability Assessment

- New Zealand continues to be concerned about the ongoing fiscal impact of the fuel crisis on the Pacific, already costing the region about one billion US dollars in additional fuel costs since the crisis started. We have provided budget support, established a technical assistance facility, and funded the Regional Fuel Security Assessment.
- We are supportive of efforts to further map regional vulnerability, ensuring they complement existing work being done in this area. New Zealand is in the early stages of identifying opportunities to upgrade existing renewable energy assets in the Pacific that are no longer in operation and/or underperforming. This targeted approach is intended to reduce fossil fuel demand without the early time and design inputs associated with greenfield developments.

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