NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

18 AUGUST 2026

Weekly Global Economic Report

MARKET INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Trade and economic updates

International

US Section 232 drone tariffs announced

On Thursday 13 August (US time) US President Trump issued a Proclamation announcing the imposition of tariffs on unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and their components, i.e. drones and their parts, following a national security investigation under section 232 of the of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 (Fact Sheet):

- Tariffs of 100% will be imposed on all UASs / drones over 25kgs, drones under 25kg with thermal imaging, and drone docking stations and parts, from 3 September 2026 (see Annex I for product scope by tariff line). Note: an exception applies for "systems for retail delivery use, agricultural use, or sale to the Department of War".
- Tariffs of 25% will be imposed on UASs / drones under 25kgs without thermal imaging, from 3 September 2026 (see Annex II for product scope by tariff line).
- Tariffs of 25% will be imposed on components or parts for use in or with UASs / drones, from 9 February 2027 (see Annex III for product scope by tariff line).
- For companies on the US Department of War's Blue UAS Cleared List, the Blue UAS Framework, or the Federal Communications Commission's Conditional Approval List on 2 September 2026, the tariffs will be imposed 180 days from the date of the proclamation.

US imports from New Zealand on the tariff lines listed in the Annexes to the Proclamation totalled NZ$68 million in the year to June 2026 (Annex I: $60 million; Annex II: zero; Annex II: $8 million). Officials will engage with exporters to determine what proportion of this might be within scope of the Proclamation, or the scope of the limitations or exceptions.

Vietnam and New Zealand Deepen Economic Partnership Following High-Level Visit

During Vietnamese General Secretary and President Tô Lâm's State Visit to New Zealand (12-13 August 2026), both countries reinforced trade and economic cooperation as a core pillar of their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, which was upgraded in 2025. The leaders witnessed an exchange of five arrangements, including an agricultural market access bundle that will allow access to the Vietnamese market for New Zealand honey, venison, and other deer products, as well as providing access to New Zealand for Vietnamese cut flowers and foliage. The leaders also committed to deeper collaboration in science, technology, innovation, standards development, trade facilitation, and reducing non-tariff barriers to support business growth. They agreed to explore opportunities in green and blue economy sectors and strengthen cooperation across food and fibre, investment, education, tourism, and aviation. New Zealand and Viet Nam expressed support for increasing bilateral trade and creating conditions to reach a USD 3bn (NZD 5.1bn) trade target, while encouraging greater business engagement and investment flows between the two economies.

Korea launches major push into strategic technologies

Korea has unveiled a new strategy to develop seven priority technology sectors as future drivers of economic growth and competitiveness. The “Seven Major SEED” initiative covers areas including nuclear and renewable energy, quantum technology, space and aviation, biotechnology, and critical minerals and materials. Key targets include landing on the Moon by 2030, developing a domestic 100-qubit quantum computer by 2029, and commercially deploying Korean small modular reactors by 2035. The Korean Government also plans to invest KRW10 trillion (NZD 12bn) in materials, parts and equipment and strengthen critical-mineral supply chains.

Upcoming Events and Webinars

Middle East Export Success

New Zealand Government support for your export journey
Tuesday 18 August 2026, 4–5 pm

Exporting isn’t for the faint of heart – navigating rules of origin, different tariff rates, standards, non-tariff barriers and free trade agreements, it can be hard to know where to get the help you need. The New Zealand Middle East Business Council (NZMEBC) is hosting a quick-fire panel of the key New Zealand Government agencies and departments that work to support your export journey. Join the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, New Zealand Customs, the Ministry of Primary Industries, Te Puni Kōkiri, New Zealand Story, the Export Credit Office and Capital Solutions as they share the key ways they can boost your exports into Middle East markets.

Register here

External links

The following links may provide useful information to businesses:

- NZTE's website and myNZTE provide a range of insights and tools available to support New Zealand exporters.
- The Treasury releases a weekly economic update every Friday. Stats NZ has published a data portal with near real-time economic indicators.
- MBIE publishes a sector reports series which provides regularly updated reports on all industry sectors that make up the New Zealand economy. These include official economic data and the challenges and opportunities that face New Zealand's industry sectors.
- Business.govt.nz provides tools and advice from across government to save small businesses' time and help make the business a success.
- MFAT has created a tariff finder which is designed to help goods exporters and importers maximise benefits from New Zealand's Free Trade Agreements and compare tariffs in 136 other markets.
- The all of government Trade Barriers website can be used to register any trade barriers experienced or issues exporting to an offshore market. Queries can be sent via the website or through the MFAT Exporter Helpline 0800 824 605. Enquiries will be sent to the government agency best placed to answer.
- Tatauranga Aotearoa Stats NZ provides official data on the value of New Zealand's exports and imports of both goods and services, by commodity type via the New Zealand Trade Dashboard. This interactive dashboard is updated every quarter and allows for filtering by country and by commodity type.

More info

More reports

View full list of market reports from MFAT at www.mfat.govt.nz/market-reports

If you would like to request a topic for reporting please email exports@mfat.govt.nz

To get email alerts when new reports are published, go to our subscription page.

To learn more about exporting to this market, New Zealand Trade & Enterprise's comprehensive market guides cover export regulations, business culture, market-entry strategies and more.

To contact the Export Helpdesk

email exports@mfat.govt.nz

call 0800 824 605

visit Tradebarriers.govt.nz

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