

Feedback

We welcome feedback from New Zealand exporters on this report and invite requests for reporting from New Zealand's [network of Embassies and High Commissions](#). If you would like to be added to the weekly distribution list for this report, please also email us at exports@mfat.net.

Domestic Updates

- On 27 November the Minister for Covid-19 Response Hon Chris Hipkins [announced](#) that **nine Southern African countries have been designated as Very High Risk (VHR)**. From 11:59pm Sunday 28 November NZST travel to **New Zealand** from **Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, and Zimbabwe** will be restricted in line with the VHR policy. Only New Zealand citizens, their partners and children, and parents of dependent children who are New Zealand citizens (together with any other children of those parents who are not New Zealand citizens) will be permitted to enter New Zealand. All other travellers, including New Zealand residents, are required to spend 14 days outside a VHR country before flying to New Zealand. All other information and specific requirements for travel from VHR countries is available on the [Unite Against COVID-19 website](#).
- On 2 December 11:59pm, all of New Zealand moved to the [COVID-19 Protection Framework](#). Auckland and some other regions will move to Red. Settings for all of New Zealand can be found [here](#).
- On 8-9 December, the **University of Auckland** (with support from **MFAT**) is holding the **annual Auckland Trade and Economic Policy School** – New Zealand's premier annual trade policy conference. Officials will be on hand to discuss supply chain issues, free trade agreement developments and more. The virtual nature of the event means you can dip in and out of the sessions as you need to. For a full programme and registration details, see [here](#).

Global & Multilateral Updates

- The **WTO Twelfth Ministerial Conference**, initially scheduled for 30 November – 3 December in Geneva, has been **postponed**. General Council Chair and Director General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala announced the decision at an emergency meeting of the General Council late on Friday evening. The General Council Chair confirmed, "There is no alternative but to postpone the Ministerial Council and reconvene as soon as possible when circumstances allow". The postponement comes following the announcement by Swiss authorities of new restrictions on social gathering, banning of flights from Southern Africa and the self-isolation requirements being placed on travellers from territories who have recorded cases of the Omicron COVID-19 variant.
- MFAT** held a **virtual post-COP26 stakeholder briefing** on 19 November. Led by our **Climate Change Ambassador, Kay Harrison**, the webinar gave stakeholders the opportunity to hear directly about the outcomes of COP26. More than 180 representatives of organisations with an interest in climate change attended. The discussion was constructive and engaged, with questions on a range of issues including international carbon market rules, New Zealand's support to the Pacific, and the initiatives we signed up to at COP26. A **recording** of the briefing has been posted online [here](#).
- The **ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) Joint Committee** met virtually on 29 November 2021 to **progress the upgrade negotiations**. Further negotiations will take place early in the first quarter of 2022, with a view to concluding negotiations by September 2022.
- Expo2020 Te Aratini** was a **success** with an estimated 450 people in attendance over the three-day **Festival of Indigenous and Tribal Ideas**, providing a valuable opportunity for new connections with indigenous participants from around the globe. Discussions are already turning to the next Te Aratini event and building on its legacy. The New Zealand Pavilion continues to attract visitors, with 275,000 welcomed to date. In the first week of December, New Zealand will co-host with the India Pavilion, the United Nations Pavilion and the Women's Pavilion a 'Global Solidarity for Gender Equality' event involving the screening of the Son Rise documentary.
- The **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** released its **second Economic Outlook for 2021**. The report states that global recovery continues, but its momentum has eased and is growing increasingly imbalanced. Uncertainty remains high due to the failure in ensuring effective global vaccination, leading to the continued emergence of new variants. Income levels in advanced economies are close to pre-pandemic expectations but lower-income economies, especially those with low COVID-19 vaccination rates, are at risk of being

left behind. A summary of the report can be found [here](#).

Regional Updates

Australia and the Pacific

- On 27 November, **Australia closed its international borders to non-citizens/residents** that have been in any of the **nine southern African countries affected by the COVID-19 Omicron variant** in the past 14 days. Australian citizens/residents that have been in any of those countries will be required to enter hotel quarantine for 14 days regardless of vaccination status.
- **Australian states have also responded to the new variant** and introduced **further border measures** to those announced by the federal government. New South Wales and Victoria have introduced the requirement of 72 hours of self-isolation (or “home-based quarantine”) for vaccinated arrivals from all other countries. South Australia has reverted back to 14 days quarantine for all international arrivals, just 5 days after implementing its new seven-day self-isolation requirements.
- **Australia** has announced a series of **reforms to their Pacific labour mobility programme**. The Seasonal Worker Program and Pacific Labour Scheme will be **consolidated into one streamlined programme** that will be managed entirely by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This builds on an announcement in September, where Prime Minister Morrison committed to doubling the number of Pacific workers in Australia by March 2022 to at least 25,000 workers. There are currently around 19,000 Pacific workers in Australia participating across both programmes.
- On 25 November, **Sāmoa’s Ministry of Health** issued a **new travel advisory** with immediate effect that **removes the blood serology test requirement for fully vaccinated travelers entering Sāmoa**. However, it does retain a requirement for unvaccinated children aged 12 years and under and those who satisfy vaccination exemption criteria. The requirement for travelers from countries with widespread transmission of the COVID-19 Delta variant to divert and spend 28 days or more in a low risk third country before entry to Sāmoa has been removed. This will facilitate travel from **Fiji, Australia** (NSW and Victoria), **India** and the **United Kingdom**. The mandatory vaccination requirement for adult travelers introduced from 1 July has now been extended to all travelers aged 12 years and above.
- The **Pacific Labour Mobility Annual Meeting (PLMAM)** will take place virtually 7-10 December. The meeting was an outcome of the **Labour Mobility Arrangement**, which was signed alongside [PACER Plus](#), and brings together government, industry and academic stakeholders from across the region to discuss labour mobility issues.

Asia

- From 11:59pm on Saturday 27 November, **Singapore closed its border** to all **travellers with recent travel history to seven countries in Africa**, including **Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia** and **Zimbabwe**. Returning Singapore citizens and permanent residents with travel history to any of these countries will have to serve a 10-day quarantine period at a dedicated facility.
- **Singapore’s** launch of **upcoming vaccinated travel lanes with Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates** (scheduled to commence on 6 December) have also been **deferred**, due to the Middle Eastern nations’ proximity as transport nodes to the affected African countries. Additionally, all travellers entering Singapore from **Malaysia** via the land vaccinated travel lane are now required to take an on-arrival antigen rapid test, in addition to the pre-departure PCR test.
- Travellers from **Indonesia** and **India** are able to **enter Singapore under the Vaccinated Travel Lane scheme** from 29 November onwards. This move will rebuild air links with two of Changi Airport’s top three markets (with the third being China), and is expected to substantially boost tourism revenue. Continued regional travel restrictions (which will limit Singapore’s role as a transit hub) and relatively high travel costs, which could put off cost-sensitive travellers who typically comprise the bulk of passengers on these routes, is expected to continue to limit demand for the services in at least the short term.
- Separately, Trade and Industry Minister Gan Kim Yong has foreshadowed a **reopening of the land border between Singapore and Malaysia** in coming weeks. The reopening is expected to follow a ‘Vaccinated Travel Lane-like arrangement’, with a capped number of travellers entering Singapore via the land border only needing to present a negative test (professionally administered antigen or PCR test) 2 days prior to travel. They will also need to take a PCR test upon arrival.

Europe

- On 26 November, **European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen** announced that the European Commission has proposed Member States activate the **"emergency brake" on travel from countries in southern African and other countries affected** to limit the spread of the new **Omicron variant**. The European Commission proposal includes the suspension of all air travel to affected countries “until we have a clear understanding about the danger posed by this new variant...and travellers returning from this region should respect strict quarantine rules.” It is however up to individual EU countries to impose flight bans. Many Member States, anticipating the European Commission’s proposal and concerned at the developments, have already implemented flight bans or travel
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restrictions to the region: including **Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria and Belgium**. This follows the decision by the **UK** to introduce similar restrictions on travel to a number of countries in southern Africa.

Middle East and Africa

- Following the **UK's** announcement that **South Africa** would return to being on the **red list**, as well as the **WHO's** designation of **Omicron** as a 'variant of concern', a number of **countries around the world** have decided to **ban or restrict travel to and from Southern Africa**. These include travel restrictions from the US, the EU, Sri Lanka, the UAE, Singapore, Oman, Thailand, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Russia, Iran, Malaysia, the Philippines, Israel, Turkey, the UAE, Seychelles, Cyprus, Guatemala, Saudi Arabia and Mauritius. Flights have been grounded from South Africa to the US, the UK and Europe, resulting in stranded tourists. The **South African Government** has also come out strongly against the travel bans, aligning itself with the World Health Organisation's position where it has cautioned against the imposition of travel restrictions.

Market reports released this week

- The previous global economic round-up can be found [here](#).
- A report on [China's education industry reforms](#) was prepared by the New Zealand Embassy in Beijing.

External links

The following links may provide useful information to businesses:

- [NZTE](#) has a website focused on providing COVID-19 information for exporters. They've also launched [myNZTE](#), an interactive digital portal of insights and tools available to all 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.
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More reports

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

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To contact the Export Helpdesk

Email exports@mfat.net

Call 0800 824 605

Visit Tradebarriers.govt.nz

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