



New Zealand Ministry of  
Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Manatū Aorere

26 September 2024

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OIA 29600

Thank you for your email of 5 August 2024 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*"Please supply all formal written briefings produced for the 2024 Pacific Islands Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting."*

On 15 August 2024, you agreed to refine your request to be for:

*"In relation to the 2024 Pacific Islands Forum Foreign Ministers meeting:*

1. *Please supply information from the Master Brief: MFA to Forum Foreign Ministers – August 2024 (for Officials)*
  - a. *the overview and objectives;*
  - b. *the following agenda item briefs on 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent: Baseline Report, Review of Regional Architecture (RRA), Applications for Associate Membership, PIF Presence in the United States, Climate Change and Related Initiatives; Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF),*
  - c. *the following information paper on Treaty of Rarotonga,*
  - d. *the following other business paper on New Caledonia, Ocean of Peace, Treated Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) water from Fukushima power plant, and Pacific Policing Initiative;*
  - e. *the following meeting brief on the Global and Regional Strategic Environment;*
  - f. *the following background briefs on the Forum Troika and Governance, Pacific Migration Issues, CROP Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues, AUKUS, Climate Finance, Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity, and Papua: Pacific Views;*
2. *A list of all formal briefings and list of contents following the meeting, by title and date, between 9-15 August 2024."*

On 10 September 2024, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 20 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).

The information relevant to part one of your request is attached. 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)(i) and (ii): to prejudice relations between any of the Governments of New Zealand and the self-governing State of the Cook Islands;
- 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)(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, we have identified no public interest in releasing the information that would override the reasons for withholding it.

One email has been identified as being in scope of part 2 of your request. The title of that email is: "FORMAL MESSAGE: PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM: 2024 FORUM FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING AND FORUM OFFICIALS' COMMITTEE", dated 15 August 2024.

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/](http://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](mailto: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](http://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

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
RT HON WINSTON PETERS

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING  
BRIEF FOR OFFICIALS

9 August 2024



## Overview and Objectives

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### *Strategic Overview*

1. The Pacific Islands Forum is critical to protecting and promoting New Zealand's foreign policy objectives <sup>s6(a)</sup>. As the pre-eminent Pacific-led regional mechanism, the Forum is a core platform for Pacific countries to *talanoa* and build consensus on shared challenges. With intensifying geopolitical trends exacerbating the many and varied challenges faced by the region, Pacific regionalism is important for enhancing the voice and agency of individual Pacific countries and supporting regional security and sovereignty.

2. Engagements at the Pacific Islands Forum this year will take place against a sharp deterioration in our security environment, <sup>s6(a)</sup>

In response, aligning and working with traditional and likeminded partners in service of robust and resilient regional architecture that delivers on Pacific priorities is critical.

3. Overlaying this, and of greater importance to Pacific countries, is the existential threat of the climate emergency together with the region's longstanding social, economic and security vulnerabilities. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

Transboundary threats are intensifying, including transnational crime, environmental degradation from illegal logging and maritime pollution, and IUU fishing; as well as more recent phenomena such as cybercrime, foreign interference and mis-and-disinformation.

4. The crisis in New Caledonia also reminds us that our region's history weighs heavily on the present. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

the Pacific Islands Forum <sup>s6(a)</sup>  
a constructive force to encourage diplomacy, engagement, and compromise.

5. In this context, the need to defend our interests through vigorous diplomacy is more important than ever. Our place in the Pacific is more contested, and the implications for our own national interests are real. Pacific regionalism, having been under significant pressure for the past few years, remains fragile. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

it is our Forum, with a long history and many successes to be proud of. We want the Forum to remain the pre-eminent regional platform for collective decision-making on priority issues under the direction of Leaders (including New Zealand's Prime Minister), and the central channel through which we, and our partners from outside the region, direct our engagement and resources.

### *Key Objectives*

6. The Forum Foreign Ministers' Meeting, alongside the Ministerial economic, trade and women meetings, forms part of a suite of meetings that contribute to the agenda for the Forum Leaders' Plenary and Retreat, to be held 26-30 August in Tonga. New Zealand has a strong interest in working with other Forum Members through this process to strengthen our collective resilience to current and emerging threats through strong regional unity.

7. Related to this is the importance we place on responding to Pacific priorities. The meeting will provide an opportunity to connect and discuss, as Pacific partners, how our region



can work together in response to our shared challenges, and how we can shape engagement in ways that support Pacific priorities and enhance Pacific resilience.

8. In line with that, our policy priorities for the Pacific Islands Forum focus on:

- **Strengthening Pacific regionalism and Forum centrality** through a unified Forum, appropriately resourced Secretariat, coordinated regional effort in support of the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, and bolstering engagement with Forum Dialogue Partners;
- **Advancing discussions on regional security priorities**, including our collective understanding of taking a Pacific-led approach to security and promoting a coherent regional approach to our security architecture; and,
- **Reinforcing Pacific leadership on climate ambition and resilience**, including strengthening regional coordination and climate diplomacy ahead of COP29 and building on Leaders' declarations in support of the maintenance of maritime zones and continuity of statehood in light of climate change-related sea-level rise.

9. Within this framework, Foreign Ministers will be asked to make decisions on a set of recommendations stemming from the review of regional architecture; <sup>s6(b)(ii)</sup>

and the scope of baseline data from which to measure progress under the auspices of the *2050 Strategy*. These will then be referred to Leaders for endorsement.

10. More broadly, the meeting also provides a further, important opportunity for you to talanoa with your counterparts, including during a retreat-style breakfast ahead of the formal meeting – emphasising New Zealand's understanding that how things are done in the Pacific is just as important as what is announced.

#### *Context*

11. Tonga, as the incoming Pacific Islands Forum Chair, will host the 53<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meetings in Nuku'alofa, with the Leaders' Retreat taking place in Vava'u on 29 August. The theme for PIF 2024 is: *Transformative Resilient Pasifiki: Build Better Now*.

12. The Pacific Islands Forum Officials' Committee lays the policy and strategic groundwork for the Forum Foreign Ministers' Meeting and the Forum Leaders' Retreat. This year, the Committee will meet over 6-7 August. New Zealand will conclude its year of Chair responsibilities at this meeting.

#### *Programme and Media*

13. You will travel to Fiji by NZDF aircraft, arriving in Nadi in the early morning of 9 August before heading to Suva later that morning via a commercial flight and arriving in time for the opening breakfast retreat session. The meeting will conclude in the evening of 9 August, after which you will depart on 11 August for your tour of the North Pacific.

14. We expect several media outlets to travel with you to the Forum Foreign Ministers' Meeting. You will have one stand-up with the New Zealand media contingent at the conclusion of the meeting to share your reflections and answer questions on the day and Pacific regionalism more broadly. There may be opportunity to highlight New Zealand's support for the Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme.

MEETING BRIEFS

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## Global and Regional Strategic Environment

### Intervention

- As a Pacific country, New Zealand has a direct stake in the region's peace, stability, prosperity, and resilience. Our own national security and economic prosperity is inextricably tied to developments in this region. We have said before that we have, in a very genuine sense, a shared Pacific destiny.
- Since returning as Foreign Minister, I have been struck by the extent to which geopolitical dynamics have sharpened in the region. The strategic environment is not benign, far from it. It has never been more apparent just how much diplomacy and statecraft matter in our troubled world.
- In this context strengthened regionalism is essential. The Pacific Islands Forum plays a critical role to bolster regional development and security, and to amplify our collective voice to hold bigger countries to account. It ensures we can all engage as equals as we consider the complex challenges we are all facing.
- External partners are increasingly interested in stepping up engagement in the region. The onus is on us as Pacific countries to ensure that there are good mechanisms that facilitate partner engagement, and to direct partners to deliver on our priorities.
- We must demand quality, meaningful support. When New Zealand is asked how to support the Pacific, we tell partners that support should be Pacific-owned, Pacific-led, and contribute to regional stability. Activities should be co-designed, transparent, have governance structures to track progress and outcomes, and to allow changes to be made if needed.
- New Zealand's international development cooperation in the Pacific will continue to be broad based. We will also accentuate the importance of mature and respectful discussions on sensitive issues, and our intention to step up our defence, security, and trade engagement with the region.
- Security cooperation is a sensitive subject. It is sensitive because it affects us all – domestic security decisions and actions can have regional implications. Pacific countries have responsibilities to one another to promote a peaceful and stable region, and not to take actions which compromise the security of others.
- But we understand the region has other significant needs – infrastructure deficits, low growth, still limited access to power and internet, and growing needs in health and education services. This is where we think partners should be directing their efforts. And we will work with them to do so.

- Ultimately, our message to the region during this time of sharpening geopolitical competition is that we are all stronger together, Pacific leadership and unity is our strongest sail to navigate the current challenging winds.

### New Zealand's Position

- Today's complex strategic environment is bringing increased external interest to the Pacific; this brings financial opportunity and strategic risk. We want a united Pacific that works together to protect and advance shared interests over the long-term.

### Handling Advice

- s6(a)  
we think it important to continue to draw attention to the need for Pacific countries to seek better outcomes from partners and to work together more effectively as a region.
- This is not a formal agenda item, but can be drawn on as required, particularly in the breakfast retreat and following the Secretary General's report

### Background

1. Our interest in the Pacific is non-discretionary. New Zealand's engagement in the region is underpinned by our interests in a peaceful, stable, prosperous, and resilient Pacific. Regional instability or insecurity carries direct national security impacts for us.

2. We benefit from supporting Pacific countries to build resilience and manage the challenge of intensifying geostrategic competition, which has brought a wider range of non-Pacific partners into the region. Geostrategic competition has fuelled political instability, over-securitisation, <sup>s6(a)</sup>

and shifts focus away from Pacific priorities (including climate change).

3. s6(a)

We work hard to support Pacific priorities, both directly and by influencing third countries' approaches. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

s6(a)

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## 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent: Baseline Report

### Intervention

- New Zealand supports the 2050 Strategy as the shared vision for our region's future, and the articulation of priorities for collective action and partner engagement that is Pacific-led.
- The Prioritised Regional Collective Actions (RCAs), and the 2050 Baseline Report are important elements that will enable clear, results-focused reporting on progress to Leaders to facilitate good decision making.
- For New Zealand, it is important that we take a holistic approach in implementing the 2050 Strategy. Meeting the social and economic development aspirations of our region underpins our security, our well-being, and our confidence in acting as a region.
- The Strategy is a tangible form of regionalism and our guiding document for partners' engagement in the region. We need our partners to recognise our Pacific priorities, not just on a country-by-country basis, but on global issues such as climate change, connectivity, economic integration, and peace and security.
- And there is strength in working together towards a region of greater integration, greater prosperity, and a more secure future in line with the direction of our Leaders.
- We see real possibilities here. We already have models: Australia and New Zealand have a Closer Economic Relations agreement; citizens from Niue and Cook Islands can travel freely to and from New Zealand; and labour mobility as in increasingly important part of many of our economies.

### New Zealand's Position

- The 2050 Strategy aligns with New Zealand's support of a shared approach to regional challenges, enhanced coordination, and a coherent blueprint for engagement from partners.
- New Zealand supports effective monitoring of the region's progress towards the goals and outcomes of the Strategy, with an interest in reporting that is easily digestible and accessible. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

### Handling Advice

- <sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>

## Background

1. The 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan is the region's map for achieving the goals and outcomes of the Strategy. It articulates Regional Collective Action (RCAs) that will help realise our collective vision for the future.
2. The 2050 Baseline Report will provide a baseline against which future progress can be measured. This will be accompanied by a report on progress against 27 RCAs prioritised by Leaders last year, including the 12 Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity (see further background brief below).
3. Australia and New Zealand data will be included in the Baseline Report as we are "in and of the region", and recognise shared challenges, transboundary issues and the collective effort required to achieve the 2050 goals.
4. The 2050 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan – with support from New Zealand – is designed to support consistent reporting against the 2050 Implementation Plan. Monitoring exercises are suggested to be undertaken biennially.
5. The 27 RCAs are categorised into the 7 Thematic Areas under the Strategy, which are:
  - Political Leadership and Regionalism
  - People Centred Development
  - Peace and Security
  - Resource and Economic Development
  - Climate Changes and Disasters
  - Ocean and Environment
  - Technology and Connectivity

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## Review of Regional Architecture (RRA)

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### Intervention

- New Zealand is supportive of the recommendations in the Review of Regional Architecture Report Phase 2.
- These should better position Forum Leaders to drive priorities across the regional architecture, bed in the 2050 Strategy as the region's guiding framework, and strengthen the Forum Secretariat's coordination functions and mandate.
- We also agree with reforming dialogue partner engagement through the proposed tiering arrangements. Distinguishing between enduring, strategic partners to the region and sector development partners with different access and privileges will help the Forum to engage with all its partners in the most effective and efficient way.
- Phase 3 of the RRA will be an important next step to look at the region's 'hard wiring' and how the structural architecture of the region can best serve the vision of the 2050 Strategy.

### New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand supports the RRA Phase 2 recommendations, and the proposal for a Phase 3.
- The RRA work aligns with New Zealand's interests in reinforcing the pre-eminence and centrality of the Pacific Islands Forum and the 2050 Strategy, improving the functionality of the Pacific regional agency network, ensuring the Forum Secretariat is positioned for better performance, and rationalising the engagement with the Forum of the myriad of regional partners.

### Handling Advice

- s9(2)(g)(i)

### Background

1. The Review of Regional Architecture (RRA) was commissioned by Forum Leaders to ensure that Pacific regional processes and institutions are fit for purpose to deliver on the ambitions of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.
2. RRA recommendations to Forum Foreign Ministers and then to Forum Leaders include options to strengthen the effectiveness, coherence and resilience of the regional framework ('soft wiring'). Leaders will decide whether a further phase of the RRA takes place from late 2024 to assess options for regional architecture rationalisation or consolidation ('hard wiring').

3. New Zealand has been fully engaged in the RRA process to date, which has been led by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and involved all the Pacific regional agencies (known as the CROP or Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific). <sup>s6(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)</sup>

4. The recommendations align well with New Zealand's ambitions for the RRA and include:

- reformed regional governance mechanisms, with clearer lines on agenda setting and decision making between the thematic Ministerial meetings and Forum Leaders;
- deeper coordination and collaboration between the CROP agencies including opportunities to harmonise back-office functions and other processes;
- stronger Pacific Islands Forum processes through improvements to meeting charters and mandates, <sup>s6(b)(ii)</sup>
- a new streamlined PIF Partnership Mechanism introducing two tiers of Dialogue Partners with different privileges. <sup>s6(b)(ii)</sup>

and

- better linkages between the sub-regional groupings, such as the Melanesia Spearhead Group, and Forum governance platforms.

5. <sup>s6(b)(ii)</sup>

What we want is a well-functioning, coordinated and delineated set of agencies, delivering quality services at good value for money.

6. Previous regional reviews that have recommended CROP structural changes have been challenging, including because the Pacific country where each agency is head-quartered usually wants to retain their hosting status and associated benefits.

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## Applications for Associate Membership

### Intervention

- New Zealand supports Pacific regionalism and considers it a positive for non-sovereign territories to play a more active role in regional conversations, including at the Forum.

### New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand supports the respective applications for Associate Member status by Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas. <sup>s6(b)(i)</sup>
- Tokelau, a New Zealand dependent territory, is also a PIF Associate Member.

### Handling Advice

- <sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>

### Background

1. Forum Leaders decided in 2004 to create a category of 'Associate Membership' of the Pacific Islands Forum in order to promote closer contacts with non-sovereign Pacific territories. Any territory in the Pacific Islands region may submit a written request to the Forum Secretary General, who then puts the application forward for consideration at the annual pre-Leaders Forum Officials' Committee (FOC) meeting. The FOC may make a recommendation – via Foreign Ministers – to Leaders, who then consider the application at their next annual Leaders' Meeting. The Secretariat and Chair may in consultation decide to process the application intersessionally, provided all Leaders provide written agreement.

#### *Entitlements of Associate Members*

2. Associate Members are entitled to attend and speak at the Plenary Session of the Forum Leaders' Meeting and other Leaders' meetings, but are not entitled to attend the Leaders' Retreat or participate in decisions. Associate Members are also allowed to attend and speak at Forum Ministerial Meetings and FOC meetings, and to participate in Forum working groups.

#### *Criteria for Associate Membership*

3. In making decisions about admissions to Associate Membership, the Secretariat considers six general criteria, including the territory's commitment to the vision and purpose of the Forum, and whether the territory exercises a degree of self-government such that it determines its own policy on regional issues and will represent itself and its own interest in regional meetings.

#### *Guam, American Samoa and Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas*

4. Guam has been a PIF observer since 2011 and expressed interest in applying for Associate Membership status during the 'Our Ocean' Conference in Palau in April 2022. A formal application was made in February 2023. <sup>s6(b)(ii)</sup>

American Samoa lodged its



application in December 2023, s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)

5. The Forum Secretariat is planning an assessment visit to the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas after the Leaders Meeting in August.

s6(b)(i)

s6(b)(ii)

This will be progressed for Ministerial consideration, if agreed by the Forum Officials Committee meeting immediately prior to the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting.

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## PIF Presence in the United States

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s9(2)(j)

### New Zealand's Position

s9(2)(j)

### Handling Advice

- s9(2)(g)(i)

### Background

1. At the February 2023 PIF Special Leaders' Retreat, <sup>s6(b)(ii)</sup>

The Secretariat was ultimately tasked to produce an assessment report on the issue for Leaders' consideration at their 2023 Meeting, which was then subsequently deferred to this year's Leaders' Meeting to allow for more discussion at officials' level.

2. <sup>s6(b)(ii)</sup>

3. s6(a)

s6(a), s9(2)(j)

4. The PIF currently has a presence in Geneva (WTO, UN, and Pacific Trade and Invest functions), and Pacific Trade and Invest (PTI) Offices in Australia, New Zealand, China and Japan. Geneva remains the only international PIF office dedicated to driving political and multilateral partnerships. s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(j)

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## Climate Change and Related Initiatives

### Intervention

- Climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of Pacific peoples.
- The Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) usefully focuses attention on dimensions of resilience, including disasters, climate-related mobility, and engagement of non-government sectors in resilience.
- New Zealand supports an integrated approach to tackling climate change and reducing broader disaster risks and has supported the useful work of the Pacific Resilience Partnership since 2017.
- As with any regional strategy or flagship programme, we should continue what is working well, and adapt to changing circumstance and priorities. In that regards we consider a future role for the Pacific Resilience Partnership should be assessed as part of the 2050 Strategy Implementation process, alongside other regional initiatives and the Review of Regional Architecture process.

### Announcement

- New Zealand is pleased to confirm our support for the Pacific Community (SPC) implemented Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme.
- I am pleased to announce today that New Zealand has committed NZ\$20 million over the eight-year programme, including NZ\$4 million already provided this year.
- The Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme will help ensure that Pacific countries are better prepared for, and more resilient to, the impacts of disasters.
- It places Pacific countries at the centre of responses, giving countries access to humanitarian relief supplies within 48 hours of a disaster to help meet immediate needs following an emergency.
- We are proud to join this initiative alongside the other donors, including Australia.

Together, our support for the programme represents a significant investment in the disaster preparedness capability in the region.

## New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand supports the useful work of the Pacific Resilience Partnership since 2017.
- It is timely to consider whether and how it could be brought into regional rationalisation efforts through the Review of Regional Architecture (RRA) process.
- New Zealand supports “aid effectiveness” efforts to reduce fragmentation and drive for greater impact in regional initiatives.
- New Zealand supports the Pacific Regional Climate Mobility Framework as a guide for Pacific government action and will engage on development of an implementation plan through the Joint Working Group on Climate Mobility.

### *Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme: announcement*

- New Zealand strongly supports the Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme.
- The programme will help ensure that Pacific countries are better prepared for, and more resilient to, the impacts of humanitarian emergencies.
- New Zealand will provide NZ\$20 million over eight years. New Zealand and Australia will jointly announce their support via separate interventions during the meeting.

## Handling Advice

- It is recommended that under this agenda item we announce New Zealand's support for the Pacific Humanitarian Warehouse Programme, in coordination with Australia.

## Background

1. Climate change is the greatest threat to Pacific livelihoods, security, and wellbeing. Climate change impacts across the region will include water insecurity, acute food insecurity, and human displacement. Working at the intersection of climate change, security, human mobility, and humanitarian action will be crucial.
2. The Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) architecture has been central to advancing regional climate policy. Pacific advocacy secured the 1.5-degree target in UNFCCC negotiations and the 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy aims for continue global leadership on climate.
3. A key pillar of the COP28 outcome was states agreeing to contribute to a transition away from fossil fuels. This drew on the 2023 PIF Leaders meeting.<sup>1</sup>
4. It is important that the <sup>s6(a)</sup>

Securing the COP31 bid for a Pacific COP (in 2026) would be a valuable opportunity to profile Pacific priorities.

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<sup>1</sup> Leaders committed to “transition away from coal, oil and gas in our energy systems in line with IPCC pathways for limiting global average temperatures to 1.5°C above preindustrial levels with a peak in fossil fuel consumption in the near term.”



5. New Zealand welcomed the historic decisions on loss and damage finance at COP27 and are pleased to have an Alternate Member on the Board of the loss and damage Fund. Fiji is also on the Board, representing SIDS. Cook Islands and Vanuatu are supporting Fiji as advisors and will in the future sit on the Board.

### **Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific**

6. The Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific: An Integrated Approach to Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management 2017 – 2030 (FRDP) mid-term review demonstrates efficacy in regional efforts to address disasters, climate-related mobility, and engagement of non-government sectors in resilience discussions through the work of the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP).

7. While the PRP and its thematic working groups offers a useful point of engagement for governments, civil society, academia, and CROP agencies, further work is required to develop a functional FRDP Monitoring and Assessment Framework and to meet mandates for annual reporting to PIF Leaders.

### **Sea-bed Mining**

8. In areas beyond national jurisdiction, New Zealand's substantive position is that mining should not be carried out in the absence of a Mining Code that ensures effective protection of the marine environment, as per the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

9. Within areas of national jurisdiction, New Zealand respects the rights of states to manage their own mineral resources in line with their stewardship responsibilities, consistent with UNCLOS. New Zealand has a domestic regime which allows applications for seabed mining within our jurisdiction to be considered.

### **Disasters**

10. The Pacific is the priority for New Zealand's humanitarian action, with the region experiencing an average of three disasters per year, exacerbated by climate change. We are investing significant new resource in this space including regional warehousing and secondments to support National Disaster Management Offices.

### **Pacific Regional Climate Mobility Framework**

11. The Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility was endorsed by PIF Leaders in November 2023. It is a high-level guide for addressing the complex issue of climate mobility. The Framework considers challenges and solutions across a range of climate mobility: staying in place; planned relocation; migration and displacement.<sup>s6(a)</sup>

12. In endorsing the Framework, the Leaders tasked the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to oversee its implementation. The next step is the development of an implementation plan of the Framework to translate the high-level commitments into collective regional actions. Regional consultation on the Implementation Plan is planned for September/October 2024, with a final implementation plan to be submitted through the Forum Sub-Committee on Regional Security to PIF Leaders for their endorsement in 2025.

13. New Zealand will continue to be an active participant in the Joint Working Group, co-chaired by Fiji and Tuvalu, that oversaw the drafting of the Regional Framework. The Joint Working Group will continue to play a critical role in consolidating views from across the region and stakeholders in the development of the implementation plan. The Group consists of Forum Members, regional Pacific agencies, UN agencies and inter-governmental agencies.

14. New Zealand funds the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme (PCCMHS), which supported the development of the Regional Framework and continues to facilitate regional dialogue and capability to strengthen the Pacific's ability to respond to climate mobility challenges.

15. Prime Minister Luxon announced a NZ\$3.6 million contribution to Fiji's Climate Relocation of Communities Trust Fund in June 2024. This is the second contribution to the Fund from New Zealand. The fund is supporting the planned relocation of Fijian communities affected by climate change.

### **Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme**

16. The Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme (PHWP) is a new, Australian initiated, Pacific Community (SPC) implemented initiative. It will ensure that 14 Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste have local humanitarian warehousing capacity with prepositioned relief supplies which they can distribute within the first 48 hours of a humanitarian emergency.

16. Over eight years, the PHWP will cost NZ\$108–130 million. Australia has made the largest contribution of AUD\$55 million. Former Foreign Minister Mahuta approved a New Zealand contribution of NZ\$20 million over eight years in September 2023. A funding arrangement was signed with SPC in June 2024, with \$4 million paid on signing.

18. s6(a)

19. It was initially planned that you would announce New Zealand's NZ\$20 million funding for the PHWP during your planned visit to Noumea in May 2024, before the visit was cancelled.

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## Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF)

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### Intervention

- New Zealand remains supportive of the Pacific Resilience Facility.
- However, we recognise that there are still key decisions to be made, and a significant amount of work to be done, before the PRF can be established, after which further significant work will be required to make it fully operational.
- There are several other risks that need to be carefully managed. New Zealand will continue to engage with the Secretariat to support this work.

### New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand's positioning has been as an open-minded partner on the PRF, aiming to be responsive to priority-setting as determined by Pacific governments.

### Handling Advice

- The PRF was discussed at the recent Forum Economic Ministers Meeting. This agenda item will be an update on the PRF for Foreign Ministers. There may be an expectation that we will signal our support in line with the intervention above.

### Background

1. The PRF aims to increase the grant financing to Pacific Islands Forum members to build resilience by accumulating a capital fund, and a much smaller operational fund, from each of which to invest in preparedness for natural disasters and the impacts of climate change, with a particular focus on community-level projects.
2. The proposal to establish the PRF was first endorsed at the 50<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Forum in Tuvalu in August 2019 with Leaders endorsing the final PRF design at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum in the Cook Islands in November 2023.
3. New Zealand has consistently signalled our support for the PRF (although not a dollar amount).<sup>s6(a)</sup>
4. There are a number of risks with the PRF that have yet to be fully addressed and managed. These relate to both the establishment of the PRF, and to its operation, and include the PRF not meeting its target capitalisation, as well as uncertainties around the PRF financial model and the long-term sustainability of that model.

INFORMATION PAPERS

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## Treaty of Rarotonga

### Intervention

- New Zealand is a strong supporter of the Treaty, which is our region's concrete contribution to a nuclear weapon-free world.
- The Treaty continues to serve us well some 38 years after its entry into force.
- We support efforts to universalise the Treaty in our region and to encourage ratification of its Protocols by the United States.

### New Zealand's Position

- We support considering practical ways to 'operationalise' the treaty, in line with the direction from Leaders. <sup>s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>

We acknowledge the Treaty affirms the South Pacific's commitment to keeping our region free of environmental pollution by radioactive wastes and other radioactive matter, <sup>s6(a)</sup>

- New Zealand is a strong supporter of other international instruments that reinforce our objective of a nuclear weapon-free world, including the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (to which a majority of Pacific states belong), the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We also encourage their universalisation.

### Handling Advice

- There is no specific agenda item on the Treaty of Rarotonga. However, should the opportunity arise, it is helpful to make an intervention in view of our strong support for this Treaty, <sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>, <sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>

### Background

1. The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty ('Treaty of Rarotonga') entered into force in 1986. It prohibits the manufacture, use and testing of nuclear weapons, and prohibits the dumping of radioactive waste by parties. It does not prohibit nuclear propulsion.

2. It has 13 Parties: Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Samoa. The Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau, outside the zone, are not Parties to the Treaty but are eligible to become so.

3. The Treaty has three Protocols concerning stationing, testing and use of nuclear weapons that are open to specified nuclear weapon states to join. The United States is the only nuclear weapon state to have not yet ratified these protocols.



4. In the 2019 PIF Communique, Leaders called for the “operationalisation” of the Treaty “as necessary” and reaffirmed this in 2023. The Treaty’s Consultative Committee met in July 2024, <sup>s6(b)(ii)</sup>

5. The Treaty mandates the PIF Secretary-General (treaty depository) to report to PIF Leaders on the Treaty.

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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## New Caledonia

### Intervention

- As a near neighbour and a fellow member of the Pacific Islands Forum, New Zealand is deeply concerned by the unrest in New Caledonia – a concern shared by many of our Pacific partners joined here today and discussed with PIF leaders at PALM10 last month.
- The situation in New Caledonia is a test of the effectiveness of our regional architecture in dealing with a crisis response. It provides an opportunity for the PIF to play a constructive role.
- We support the PIF finding an appropriate mechanism and way forward to help facilitate dialogue, engagement or mediation between the different actors in New Caledonia and urge parties to act in good faith in participating in democratic dialogue about the path forward.
- Recognising the ongoing security challenges, we support the revival of the Ministerial Committee on New Caledonia and encourage a mission to visit New Caledonia. We look forward to a report back at PIF Leaders in Tonga.

### New Zealand's Position

- Express New Zealand's deep concerns about the situation. We continue to call for calm and the return to respectful dialogue. We have a strong interest in the peaceful resolution of the situation in New Caledonia.
- Encourage the PIF to play a role in leading the region's response. We support the revival of the Ministerial Committee on New Caledonia and encourage a fact-finding mission before PIF Leaders. A PIF mission must be balanced and engage constructively with all political actors.

### Handling Advice

- New Zealand should make an intervention early on, but also at a time where<sup>s6(a)</sup>

### Background

1. At PALM10, Forum members formally endorsed a PIF mission to New Caledonia led by the Forum Ministerial Committee on New Caledonia. This is comprised of the Troika (Fiji, Cook Islands, Tonga). As incoming Chair, the Solomon Islands may also join<sup>s6(b)(ii)</sup>

s6(a)

2. President Macron has not yet signed off the PIF's formal request to send a mission to New Caledonia. Given Paris' hosting of the Olympics, caretaker government and the ongoing unrest in New Caledonia,<sup>s6(a), s6(b)(i)</sup> . Aligning the timing for Pacific leaders may also present a challenge.

3. s6(a) MSG Leaders released a statement on the situation in New Caledonia at PALM10. The statement includes calls on France to allow a Joint UN-MSG "information mission" to visit New Caledonia, for at least one MSG representative to be included in the PIF mission, denounces the third referendum results, and asks that the MSG actively consider a UNGA resolution on the conduct and results of the referendum. s6(a), s6(b)  
(ii)

4. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

5. s6(a)

s6(a),  
s6(b)  
(i)

6. s6(a)

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## Ocean of Peace

### Intervention

- New Zealand welcomes ongoing discussion on the *Ocean of Peace* and acknowledges Fiji's significant work in developing this concept.
- New Zealand sees a clear role for the *Ocean of Peace* as a means to further reinforce a Pacific-centric articulation of how the region can collectively address shared security challenges and serve to further solidify the Pacific's unique contribution to global peace and security conversations.

### New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand is supportive of Fiji's *Ocean of Peace* concept. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

### Handling Advice

- s9(2)(g)(i)

### Background

1. In November 2023, Fijian Prime Minister Rabuka outlined his high-level vision for a "Zone of Peace" to Pacific Islands Forum Leaders. Over the past year the concept has evolved in the *Ocean of Peace* <sup>s6(a)</sup> <sup>s6(b)(i)</sup>

2. At the Forum Officials' Sub-Committee on Regional Security in June 2024, Fijian officials undertook the first substantive articulation of the concept. <sup>s6(b)(i)</sup>

3. <sup>s6(b)(i)</sup>

4. New Zealand registered that the *Ocean of Peace* could play an important role in reinforcing Pacific Islands Forum centrality, further entrenchment of a regional security norm that Pacific countries have the collective will and capacity to meet their own security needs, and send a clear global articulation of the Pacific's collective identity and sense of unity.



Annex: Ocean of Peace <sup>s6(b)(i)</sup>

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s6(b)(i)

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## Treated ALPS (Advanced Liquid Processing System) water from Fukushima power plant

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### Intervention

- New Zealand recognises that the Fukushima treated water release is a significant issue of interest to the Pacific, particularly in light of the region's traumatic nuclear legacy.
- As the international authority on nuclear safety matters, we reiterate our full confidence in the International Atomic Energy Agency's independent advice and assessments that the release of the treated water is consistent with international safety standards.
- New Zealand has been clear throughout that consistent transparency and open communication is essential. Accordingly, we appreciate the sustained efforts by Japan and the IAEA to engage proactively and transparently with the Forum, and we encourage them to continue this level of engagement.

### New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand supports ministerial consideration of this matter in recognition of the region's traumatic nuclear legacy.
- New Zealand has consistently advocated for sustained and meaningful dialogue between Japan, the IAEA and the Pacific. We will continue to promote such engagement, including in support of regional scientific capacity building, but do not want to see this duplicate the role of the IAEA as the international authority on nuclear safety matters.
- New Zealand has expressed full confidence in the independent advice of the IAEA as set out in its comprehensive report of July 2023, which concluded that the release was consistent with international safety standards and would have a negligible impact on human and environmental health. <sup>s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>

### Handling Advice

<sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>

### Background

1. In March 2011, the Great East Japan Earthquake and subsequent tsunami triggered a major accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, including the meltdown of three nuclear reactors. The use of water to cool nuclear fuel debris after the accident has resulted in the accumulation of over one million tonnes of water, now stored across more than 1,000 steel water tanks at the Fukushima site.

2. In April 2021, Japan announced its plan to discharge treated water from Fukushima into the Pacific Ocean in a sequence of phases over an approximately 30-40 year period. Under the plan, the water is filtered through an Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) prior to discharge to remove radioactive contaminants. The first discharge took place in August 2023, with the latest (seventh at the time of writing) commencing in June 2024.

*Role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)*

3. At Japan's request, the IAEA set up a Task Force to assess whether Japan's plan was consistent with relevant international safety standards. The Agency's two-year review concluded with a Comprehensive Report, released in July 2023, which found that the discharge was consistent with international safety standards and "would have a negligible radiological impact on people and the environment".

4. To provide ongoing transparency, the IAEA committed to continuously monitor the discharge for the duration of its operation, including through a permanent on-site presence at Fukushima and by providing live, publicly available monitoring data on its website.

*Response of the Pacific to Date*

5. Many of our Pacific neighbours have voiced strong concerns regarding the potential implications of the discharge for human and environmental health, reflecting their historical experience of nuclear testing. The initial reaction from the Pacific included the establishment of a PIF Panel of Experts, a group of scientists commissioned by the PIF to interpret and translate scientific data provided by Japan to assist PIF Members' understanding of the regional implications of the discharge. In its final report on the matter, the Panel concluded that the decision to discharge the treated water was premature and lacking in sound scientific basis.<sup>2</sup> s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Given the purpose of the Panel was to provide advice on the discharge plan prior to its commencement, the PIF elected not to extend the Panel's mandate in February 2024.

6. The discharge was one of the principal issues at last year's PIF Leaders Meeting, with Leaders releasing a standalone statement noting their commitment to embedding nuclear-related discharge as a standing item on the PIF agenda and to establishing an annual political dialogue with Japan to consider safety issues based on international safety standards and ongoing independent monitoring by the IAEA. The statement also affirmed Leaders' commitment to building regional scientific capacity and monitoring capabilities to independently assess impacts to the Pacific Ocean and human health.

*Japanese Funding of Marine Radioactive Monitoring and Capacity-building in the Pacific*

7. Japan announced in March 2024 funding to the IAEA of €3.6 million/NZ\$6.5 million to support marine environmental protection and capacity-building for marine radioactivity monitoring in the Pacific. At this stage it remains unclear how this funding will be utilised.

8. New Zealand has advocated that the IAEA work with Pacific regional scientific agencies like The Pacific Community (SPC) to ensure the funding builds the capacity of the region as a whole and to increase the likelihood of any capability being sustained in the long term. Our advocacy is informed by the desire of the region for a Pacific-owned and Pacific-led marine radioactivity monitoring capability.

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<sup>2</sup> One member of the Panel, Antony Hooker, dissented from the Panel's view.

## Pacific Policing Initiative

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### Intervention

- New Zealand welcomes Australia's initiative which reflects our shared interest in regional security and our commitment to meet security needs from within the region.
- We are pleased the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police are supporting the design and development of this initiative. We all have a strong interest in initiatives like this that are Pacific-led, Pacific owned, reinforce our existing architecture, and contribute to regional stability.
- We would welcome further consideration of this initiative by our Leaders at the forthcoming Pacific Island Forum Leaders Meeting, as we work together to move it towards successful implementation.

### New Zealand's Position

- New Zealand supports the strategic intent of the Pacific Policing Initiative (PPI), including that it promotes Pacific interoperability, s6(a) and demonstrates strong commitment to Pacific police services.
- s6(a)

### Handling Advice

- s6(a)

### Background

1. s6(a)

PPI has three pillars: regional policing centres of excellence; a Pacific Policing Support Group (a multi-country deployable force for major events or major incidents); and a Pacific policing development and coordination hub in Brisbane.

2. s6(a)



s6(a)

3. s6(a)

4. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

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BACKGROUND BRIEFS

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## Forum Troika and Governance

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### Key Points

- New Zealand recognises the importance of international advocacy and consensus-building led by the Forum Chair and wants to ensure that all Members are supported to take on this role.
- We support strengthening the capacity and role of the Pacific Islands Forum Troika.

### Background

1. The Pacific Islands Forum Troika is a rotating leadership mechanism among Forum Chairs. The Troika involves the Leaders of the former, current and incoming Forum Chairs. This year, the Troika consists of Fiji Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka, Cook Islands Prime Minister Mark Brown, and Tonga Prime Minister Hu'akavameiliku. Following the handover of the Chair role later this month, Solomon Islands will replace Fiji on the Troika as the next incoming Chair.
2. The primary responsibility of the Troika is to support the Forum Chair in their engagement, advocacy and decision-making. For example, as the Cook Islands is not a United Nations member, officials from the governments of Fiji and Tonga have led Pacific coordination efforts for UN Committees and dialogues during Cook Islands' tenure as Forum Chair.
3. In 2022, Forum Leaders endorsed a Troika Charter which formalised the Troika mechanism, supporting the Chair to call meetings of the Troika and receive administrative support from the Forum Secretariat. This formalisation was partly a result of the Suva Agreement, which directed Members to ensure PIF mechanisms were adequately representative of the Forum membership. In effect, each PIF Troika should have one Melanesian, one Polynesian and one Micronesian representative. This is not always practical (the current Troika has two Polynesian Members, for example), but it is important that the settings enable this representation where possible.

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## Pacific Migration Issues

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### Key Points

- New Zealand's immigration settings support both domestic and foreign priorities. They can serve to enhance or diminish our relationships and broader interests, particularly with Pacific countries.<sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>
- The RSE scheme has been a significant success,<sup>s6(a)</sup> raising social impact and "brain drain" concerns in some Pacific countries.
- Pacific migration issues are not limited to the impact of visa settings, rather includes efforts to maintain people-to-people links, ensuring the benefits of labour mobility are realised, supporting education opportunities and future considerations around climate.

### Background

1. New Zealand is a country in and of the Pacific. This is central to our credibility in the region, underpinned by the long histories of migration, close family linkages and the growth of Pacific diaspora, employment opportunities and education. Nearly 1 in 10 New Zealanders identify as Pasifika and over a quarter of our population have Polynesian ancestry.

2. New Zealand's immigration settings both support and limit this connection. Our temporary labour schemes and migration pathways strengthen our Pacific bonds. But concerns about other visa settings are frequently raised<sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>  
<sup>s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>

3. Frequent requests for improved visa access continue at the highest political levels, and we anticipate the issue to be raised with Leaders. The recent announcement to remove the transit visa requirement for Fijian nationals was welcomed by Fiji,<sup>s6(b)(i)</sup>  
<sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>

4. Close coordination with Australia is important.<sup>s6(a)</sup>

Australia's PALM scheme differs from RSE in critical ways: it is not seasonal, workers are granted long-term visas, work is available in more sectors (RSE is for horticulture and viticulture only) and the numbers are much larger (uncapped with a recent total of 33,000 versus a cap of 19,500 for RSE).  
<sup>s6(a), s6(b)(i)</sup>

5. Finding the right balance is important. The RSE scheme has brought substantial benefits for industry and the workers themselves. It is the one of the top sources of income for several

## RESTRICTED

Pacific countries. Supporting Pacific countries to access our labour markets is also important for building economic and social resilience in the Pacific region <sup>s6(a)</sup>

6. The RSE scheme is driven by employers: they decide the countries from which they recruit. Sending countries determine who is eligible for the scheme. In addition to our overall cap on the scheme we are ready to agree country-level quotas if sending countries wish.

Country	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Fiji	487	70	1	879	1,160
Kiribati	289	0	0	633	660
Nauru	5	0	0	0	0
Papua New Guinea	134	0	0	248	643
Samoa	2,409	775	3,334	4,160	3,922
Solomon Islands	756	0	148	960	1,270
Tonga	1,807	0	957	1,930	1,828
Tuvalu	115	1	0	234	155
Vanuatu	4,237	1,166	4,983	7,100	6,866
<b>Total Pacific</b>	<b>10,239</b>	<b>2,012</b>	<b>9,423</b>	<b>16,144</b>	<b>16,504</b>
<b>Total Asia*</b>	<b>913</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1280</b>	<b>1,407</b>
<b>Combined Total</b>	<b>11,152</b>	<b>2,018</b>	<b>9,423</b>	<b>17,424</b>	<b>17,911</b>

7. Alongside the RSE scheme, which is run by MBIE, we have two IDC-funded programmes (\$30m over the next five years) to support RSE workers and the countries sending them. These programmes provide support for labour units in sending countries, pre-departure training, liaison officers in New Zealand, worker well-being, skills and training for workers while in New Zealand and reintegration support when they return home.

### *Regional responses*

8. Forum Trade Ministers are primarily responsible for this issue. In response to PIF member concerns the Forum Secretariat is developing Pacific Regional Labour Mobility Principles. Alongside this a refresh of the PACER Plus Arrangement on Labour Mobility is ongoing. New Zealand will continue to work with the Secretariat, PACER Plus Implementation Unit and Forum Members to ensure regional labour mobility initiatives are complementary and can meaningfully and effectively work together. We do not support the addition of any new architecture. The Pacific Labour Mobility Annual Meeting (PLMAM) includes non-PACER plus members and remains the primary gathering for addressing these issues. The next PLMAM will be held in Brisbane in November.

### *Climate mobility*

9. Recent New Zealand-funded research confirms that overwhelmingly Pacific peoples wish to remain in place rather than move due to the effects of climate change. Nonetheless we expect climate change to increasingly become a driver of migration. In 2023 PIF Leaders endorsed the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility – a global first that aims to provide practical guidance to governments planning for and managing climate mobility.



## CROP Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues

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### Key Points

- New Zealand values its membership of the CROP Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues and supports regional action to address the effects of nuclear testing in the Pacific.
- New Zealand looks forward to the Taskforce getting its work on a study under way.

### Background

1. The Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues was established in 2020, to deliver on the Forum Leaders' 2019 decision to address the ongoing impacts and legacy issues of nuclear testing focused on Marshall Islands and Kiribati. Membership is voluntary and comprises Republic of Marshall Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, New Zealand, French Polynesia, and CROP agencies with relevant expertise.

2. s6(b)(ii) . Efforts are now focused on commissioning a literature review with respect to the Runit Dome nuclear waste storage site in Marshall Islands.

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## AUKUS

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### Key Points

- New Zealand welcomes AUKUS as an initiative to enhance regional security and stability.
- We know that Pacific countries are focused on geostrategic pressures, as well as climate change as the existential security challenge facing the region.
- We understand the strategic drivers for AUKUS – we too see the deteriorating strategic environment in our wider region. A peaceful and stable region is critical to advancing Pacific priorities.
- We understand the region's long-standing concerns about nuclear issues. The AUKUS partners have reiterated their commitment to non-proliferation, and their compliance with international law – including, for Australia, the Treaty of Rarotonga. This is an important message.
- New Zealand has a long-standing and bipartisan nuclear free policy – this won't change.
- **[Pillar two – if raised]** Pillar Two of AUKUS includes cooperation in non-nuclear emerging security areas, including areas in which we already work closely with Australia, the US and the UK. We are exploring how New Zealand could potentially participate in Pillar Two. Formal decisions would be a matter for Cabinet.

### Background

1. s6(a)

2. **There continue to be a spectrum of views on AUKUS across the Pacific.**  
s6(a), s6(b)(i)

3. Officials are currently exploring where New Zealand may be able to contribute to and participate in AUKUS Pillar II projects, and seeking further details from the AUKUS partners on the specific mechanics, thresholds and likely costs involved. s9(2)(f)(iv)

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s9(2)(h)

s9(2)(f)(iv)

4. s6(a)

In the November 2023 Communique, PIF Leaders welcomed the transparency of Australia's efforts, and commitment to compliance with international law, in particular the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Rarotonga Treaty, and IAEA safeguard agreements.

5. s6(a)

6. s6(a)

AUKUS members continue to emphasise that they will remain in full compliance with all obligations, and have constructive engagement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

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## Climate Finance

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### Key Points

- New Zealand stands with the Pacific on priority climate finance issues such as loss and damage, improving access to finance, and doubling adaptation finance.
- We have now programmed much of our NZ\$1.3 billion climate finance commitment for 2022-25, guided by the *International Climate Finance Strategy – Tuia te Waka a Kiwa*.
- We are supporting the Pacific response to climate change across a range of initiatives including water, food, and energy security, disaster risk reduction, early warning systems, coastal protection and ecosystem resilience.
- We support operationalising the new loss and damage fund as soon as possible to be accessible for the Pacific and support national, programmatic approaches. We recognise the importance of addressing slow onset events and non-economic loss and damage in the region.
- We want to see agreement on a new global climate finance goal at COP 29 that will help bring more climate finance to the Pacific and make it more accessible.

### Background

#### *New Zealand's climate finance portfolio*

1. New Zealand committed NZ\$1.3 billion in grant-based climate finance for 2022-25. This is channelled through New Zealand's International Development Cooperation appropriation. At least 50% is earmarked for the Pacific and at least 50% to adaptation.
2. Delivery of climate finance is guided by the International Climate Finance Strategy - *Tuia te Waka a Kiwa* (approved in 2022). The ICFS has four goals: (1) Accelerated climate change mitigation; (2) Enhanced adaptation and resilience to the impacts of climate change; (3) Improved institutional capability and evidence-based decision making; and (4) Leveraged investment to achieve greater climate impact.
3. New Zealand delivers its climate change funding through a broad range of bilateral, regional, multi-country and multilateral initiatives. These include early warning systems, information for decision making, food security, water security, biodiversity, fisheries, climate-related mobility, renewable energy and energy transition, disaster risk reduction, supporting access to climate finance and capacity building for carbon markets.

#### *Pacific Country Flexible Financing*

4. As a direct response from calls from Pacific governments to have greater autonomy over their climate response New Zealand established its Country Flexible Finance programme. This innovative programme is designed to provide finance directly through national systems for partners to flexibly pursue their own climate priorities and strengthen their capacity to manage this effectively. The programme has been welcomed in the region and cited as an example for other donors to follow. New Zealand has programmed over \$60m of climate finance to Samoa, Fiji, Cook Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu through this programme. A capacity building component focusing on the other Pacific countries is also getting under way.

*Loss and Damage: Cumulative Risk and Rapid Onset Events*

5. In the Pacific, vulnerability to the impacts of climate change is acute, and loss and damage from the impact of adverse impacts of climate change is already a present-day reality and a threat to lives, livelihoods and state viability.

6. A new fund to address Loss and Damage was established at COP28. New Zealand has secured an Alternate Member position on the Board on the Fund (in constituency with Canada, who is the Board Member). We are pressing for the Fund to be efficient, accessible, and work for Small Island Developing States as a priority. The Fund will be hosted as an independent Financial Intermediary Fund by the World Bank. New Zealand has not yet committed funding, but a contribution will be expected, particularly from Pacific countries.

*New global climate finance goal*

7. At this years' Conference of the Parties (COP 29) in November a new post 2025 global climate finance target will be adopted, replacing the USD \$100 billion goal set in 2009. This goal will set the context for our future climate finance commitments.

8. New Zealand's priorities for the goal are to:

- ensure that climate finance commitments remain nationally determined;

s6(a)

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## Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity

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### Key Points

- The Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity is a Cook Islands initiative to prioritise nine initiatives under the 2050 Strategy.
- s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)
- s9(2)(f)(iv)

### Background

1. In 2023, the Cook Islands put forward a new initiative – the Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity (PPfP). PPfP proposes nine priority initiatives to focus efforts on the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan. The Cook Islands introduced the PPfP at the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM) in August 2023, and launched it at PIF Leaders' Week in November 2023. s7(b)(ii)

2. PPfP initiatives appear to have been drawn from Leaders' Communiqués, Ministerial meetings, and sections of the draft 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan. s6(b)(i), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

3. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(i)

### *Priorities under the PPfP*

- The Pacific Resilience Facility;
- The Weather Ready Pacific Decadal Programme;
- A Pacific Labour Mobility Framework;
- Strengthening Cyber Security Arrangements;
- Establishing a Pacific Centre of Excellence on Deep Ocean Science;
- Re-Energising the Rarotonga Treaty for a Nuclear Free Pacific;
- The Revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration;
- The Global Plastics Treaty; and

- Pacific Framework for Climate Mobility.
4. s6(b)(i), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii)

Although we welcome discussions on ensuring labour mobility schemes contribute to positive outcomes in Pacific countries, we are wary the risk of duplicating existing regional initiatives. The Pacific Labour Mobility Annual Meeting (an inclusive forum and key deliverable under the Arrangement on Labour Mobility, the side agreement to PACER Plus) already provides a platform for agreeing regional labour mobility priorities.

5. The Pacific Centre of Excellence on Deep-Ocean Science (PCEDOC) proposes establishing PCEDOC at the USP Campus in the Cook Islands. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)

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## Papua: Pacific Views

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### Key Points

- s6(a)
- New Zealand aims to strengthen cooperation with Indonesia in the Pacific in a way that advances Pacific priorities, is consistent with established regional practices, and supports Pacific regional institutions – including the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) as the region's pre-eminent regional body.
- Both the MSG and PIF Leaders have repeatedly called upon Indonesia to allow the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to assess if there are human rights abuses occurring in Papua. s6(a)

### Background

1. Papua remains a highly sensitive issue for Indonesia. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

2. s6(a), s6(b)(ii)

MSG Leaders proposed a visit to Jakarta to raise human rights issues and proposed that matters on ULMWP should be handled at the Pacific Islands Forum.

3. Papua has featured yearly on the PIF Leaders' agenda. In 2023, Leaders reaffirmed recognition of Indonesia's sovereignty over Papua and appointed a Forum Envoy comprising of the Prime Ministers of Fiji and Papua New Guinea to facilitate a dialogue with Indonesia on areas of shared interest for mutual understanding.

4. Papua New Guinea's (PNG) s6(a) recognises Indonesia's territorial integrity and sovereignty over Papua. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

5. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

6. Fiji will assume the Chair of the MSG this month. Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka has been appointed as a Special Envoy on Papua by both the MSG and the PIF, alongside PNG's

Prime Minister James Marape. They met with President Widodo in the margins of APEC last year to discuss Papua but have not been able to visit Papua. There is a possibility that Prime Ministers Rabuka and Marape may undertake a visit to Indonesia in the coming months in their Special Envoy capacities.

7. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

8. In August 2023, the ULMWP failed in its bid to go from observer to full MSG member.  
s6(a)

. In a communique released by MSG following the decision, it confirmed that ULMWP “does not meet the existing” criteria for membership and imposed a one-year membership moratorium which will expire in August 2024. Meanwhile, MSG Secretary-General Leonard Louma attracted controversy by visiting Papua, without prior agreement by MSG members, in June.

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