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Australia and New Zealand's Pacific policy: aligned, not alike

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ABSTRACT

Faced with growing Chinese engagement in the Pacific, the two traditional regional powers in that world region, Australia and New Zealand (NZ), unveiled major policy initiatives in the late 2010s. Both Australia's 'Pacific Step-up' and NZ's 'Pacific Reset' featured substantial increases in terms of development cooperation, diplomatic posts, and high-level exchanges and thus credibly signalled the two allies' desire to remain partners of first choice for Pacific Island Countries. Alignment does however not mean that Australia and NZ's Pacific policies are alike. A paired comparison highlights significant differences with respect to security and migration. I argue that the strong focus in Australia's Pacific policy on hard security reflects not only the country's more pronounced military profile and its alliance with the United States but also the country's greater sense of vulnerability which derives in part from its geographic and historical linkages with Melanesia. This contrasts with NZ's more unburdened traditional focus on Polynesia. I then trace the very different Pacific population profiles of the two Australasian states back to NZ's much greater openness to permanent migration from the region – reflecting both constitutional obligations and the development of distinct migration pathways for Pacific people. These differences are of a structural nature and are bound to shape Australia and NZ's policy approaches to the Pacific in the longer term.

Introduction

In the face of China's growing presence in the Pacific – here understood as the region covered by the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) –, Australia and New Zealand (NZ) unveiled major policy initiatives in the late 2010s. Australia's 'Pacific Step-up' (Step-up for short) and NZ's 'Pacific Reset' (Reset) bore substantial similarities. Both regional initiatives featured significant increases in terms of development assistance, diplomatic posts, and high-level exchanges, signalling their commitment to deepening political relations with Pacific Island countries (PICs). Notably, the initiatives were taken despite different government constellations in place, with conservative parties having been in power in Australia since 2013 and a left-centre coalition government emerging out of the 2017 general election in NZ.

The similarities between Australia's and NZ's recent Pacific policy initiatives are unsurprising perhaps. The two Australasian countries are close allies after all. And both Australia and NZ, sharing a history as colonial powers and founding members of various regional organisations, have played a major role as regional powers in the Pacific in the 20th century. The two Australasian states are often lumped together in this regard, despite Australia carrying much more weight in terms of population size, economic strength, military assets, and official development assistance (ODA) flows – making it more of a 'superpower' in the South Pacific (Wallis and Wesley 2016, 26).

Many similarities notwithstanding, a close inspection of Australia's and NZ's broader Pacific policies reveals significant differences in their approaches to the region which go beyond divergent diplomatic styles or their recent divergence in terms of climate policy (Wallis and Powles 2021, pp. 1055–1056). On balance, Australia's Pacific policy has been more focussed on traditional security issues. NZ, on the other hand, has been more open to permanent migration from the region than Australia. What explains these differences in the Pacific policies of Australia and NZ? I argue that a concatenation of factors helps to understand where they are coming from. First, Australia and NZ's outlooks on the region have traditionally diverged, having been shaped by their respective geographic and historical linkages to it. Comparatively speaking, Australia has focussed more on Melanesia with its more volatile political systems and NZ more on the more politically stable Polynesia. The different vantage points are compounded by historical experiences: Australia's greater sense of vulnerability is also linked to experiencing the Pacific as both a major theatre of military action and a base for attacks on its national territory in World War II; NZ suffered no such fate, contributing to its more benign view of the region.

Second, Australia has a much more developed military profile than NZ and is a formal ally of the United States (US), taking charge of some of the security-related heavy lifting in the South Pacific. Moreover, Australian foreign policy – more generally and towards the Pacific in particular – has become more security-oriented in recent decades. Third, whereas Australia has created special schemes for bringing in seasonal workers from the region, it has shied away from facilitating the permanent migration of Pacific peoples. For historical and constitutional reasons, pathways to permanent migration from the region do however exist in NZ. These differences are of a structural nature and are bound to shape respective policy approaches to the Pacific in the longer term.

The article is structured as follows. In the next section I present the analytical approach taken and the literature the article speaks to. Turning to empirics, I first delineate Australia's and NZ's recent Pacific policy initiatives, noting both similarities and differences. Taking a longer-term perspective, I then highlight how the two countries have differed with respect to two dimensions of their Pacific engagement: security and migration. I argue that relevant differences can be understood in terms of diverging (i) geographical foci and historical experiences; (ii) degrees of militarisation and alliance ties; and (iii) pathways to migration. The final section concludes and addresses theoretical implications.

Analytical approach

My comparison of Australia's and NZ's Pacific policies is an intraregional one, the 'world region' in question being Australasia. All meta-geographical concepts are social constructions. Nonetheless, scholars such as Lewis and Wigen (1997, chapter 6) or Hanson

(2009) have argued that a dozen or more 'world regions' or areas may be identified on the basis of the structural legacies of a shared colonial experience; aligned ideological, religious, cultural or other ideational interpretations (possibly facilitated by the use of a common language); the diffusion of institutions, norms and practices among proximate neighbours; and/or particularly dense regional networks. Such regional commonalities and interconnections can be strengthened through jointly created institutional arrangements.

This is clearly the case with Australasia. Australia and NZ are former settler colonies and share similar political and economic milieux. They both use variants of the Westminster system of government and are closely economically integrated courtesy of what increasingly approximates a single economic market. Both pursue free-trade policies based on export-oriented economies with strong primary sectors.

Importantly, the two Australasian countries are also close militaries allies, courtesy of the ANZUS security treaty. Alongside the US, the United Kingdom and Canada, they also belong to 'Five Eyes': an exclusive intelligence gathering and sharing arrangement set up after WWII. References to the close partnership between Australia and NZ as well as family metaphors are commonplace in official documents and statements by political representatives. For example, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's webpage on NZ states that 'Australia and New Zealand are natural allies with a strong trans-Tasman sense of family' (DFAT n.d.). Similar statements can be found concerning their cooperation in the Pacific. For instance, the Australian 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper refers to NZ as 'an essential partner in support of the economic growth, stability and security of the region' (Australian Government, 2017, 100) while a NZ cabinet paper states that 'Australia is [NZ's] closest partner in the Pacific [. . .] with broadly shared interests and objectives across the region' (Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs 2018, 8).

The literature on Australia and NZ in the Pacific has taken stock of the two allies' joint approaches, reflecting their shared interests, ambitions, and commitments to regionalism (Lawson 2017; Fry 2019, especially chapters 11 & 12). Pertinent points of divergence over time have also been noted – though usually only in passing, for instance concerning attitudes to climate change and nuclear weapons or the possession of hard and soft power resources (Baker 2015; Wallis and Powles 2018, 2021). The diplomatic 'jostling' and (friendly) rivalry of the two countries in the region have been remarked upon too (Goldsmith 2017, 189).

Wallis provides a slightly more extensive discussion of differences between Australia and NZ's Pacific engagement. She argues that such differences stem not only from NZ being 'more clearly part of the same geographic region cultural sphere as Pacific Island states' (Wallis 2017, 9–10) but also from the diverging international outlooks of Australia and NZ due to their different geographic settings and the latter's fewer available power resources. '[NZ] has a history of being more interested and engaged in Pacific Island matters', Wallis notes, '[but it] realises that its comparatively small size and limited military capability mean that it needs to cooperate with Australia [. . .] in the region' (2007, p. 10) – a point echoed by NZ government officials and academics in interviews with the author in March 2020. Collectively, the extant literature on Australia's and NZ's roles in the Pacific indicates that, despite shared interests and much collaboration, the two Australasian allies are hardly identical twins when it comes to their regional engagement.

Studies comparing the security policies of Australia and NZ also bear this out. They note not only the two allies' parallel commitments, common concerns, and bilateral cooperation but also how 'different interplays of geography, demography and politics on both sides of the Tasman' (Ayson 2006, 255) have impacted on their respective security-related priorities and defence profiles. As McKay (2021, 118) notes, 'the two countries are there for each other [in times of crisis]. Still, Australia and [NZ] understand the world differently, and exist in it differently'. A point confirmed by a final body of relevant literature, namely studies on Australia and NZ's China policies. Reflecting shared concerns, Australia and NZ have in recent years taken a more robust stance vis-à-vis China (McGregor 2019; Köllner 2021; Wallace 2021). Yet NZ's approach has been more discrete, reflecting the balancing act a small power faces in dealing with a great one.

By exploring notable differences in Australia's and NZ's approaches to the Pacific, this article speaks and adds to the literature on the two countries' foreign and security policies. It provides a context-sensitive, comparative analysis foregrounding pertinent differences especially with respect to security and migration. This is not to deny the many similarities between Australia and NZ's Pacific policies but to highlight differences where they exist, helping to provide a corrective to 'the misleading and unfortunate tendency in the literature to bind [NZ] and Australia together in analyses' (Kadıoğlu and Bezci 2020, 12).

To this end, I engage in a paired comparison which offers 'a balanced combination of descriptive depth and analytical challenge' (Tarrow 2010, 246) and helps to better understand what is specific to the individual cases. The basic idea of most-similar systems designs is to control for common systemic characteristics so that remaining differences help to account for divergence in the outcome of interest: here, the Pacific policies of the two Australasian allies. Relevant differences may be theoretical in nature: that is, derived from a certain body of established theory. For instance, in explaining differences in Australia's and NZ's recent China policy shifts, Köllner (2021) draws on small-power theorising to account for why NZ has differed in that respect from its Tasman ally. This literature is of more limited use in terms of explaining pertinent differences regarding the two countries' Pacific policies. But it does remind us that small powers such as NZ usually possess only weak military capacity due to a small population and/or economy and that they tend to rely more on multilateral organisations than their larger counterparts (Thorhallsson and Steinsson 2017, 4, 11). Small powers rely to a greater extent on other, non-military means to pursue their foreign policy goals and they tend to put a greater premium on participating in and promoting multilateral forums at various levels. The latter may help to account for NZ's more natural inclination to focus on the PIF in terms of regional order and governance.[1]

Given the different dimensions of Pacific-related policies to be explored, I opted for a bottom-up, grounded approach. In the spirit of pragmatism and with a problem-driven orientation, I privilege in this comparative analysis no master variable suggested by a certain body of theory. Instead, I engaged with primary and secondary sources to divulge the relevant causal and contextual factors helping to explain why the two Australasian Pacific policies diverge to the extent that they do. My aim here is not to trace every twist and turn of Australia and NZ's Pacific policies in the past few decades. Rather I use the recent regional initiatives as a starting point to explore differences in two important dimensions of Australia and NZ's Pacific engagement: security and migration. My sources include numerous official policy documents, parliamentary hearings, and

speeches by high-level political representatives from both Australia and NZ – several of which are used for the first time in published research. In addition, I make use of the extant literature on the two countries' Pacific policies, mostly written by Strategic Studies scholars or area specialists. Finally, I draw on a series of semi-structured elite and expert interviews conducted with government officials and academics in Wellington in March 2020. In terms of time frame, the article focusses on developments until late 2020, when the Labour-NZ First coalition government in NZ came to an end.

'Stepping-up' and 'resetting' Australia's and NZ's Pacific policies

How have Australia's and NZ's Pacific policy recalibrations unfolded, what do they contain in substantive terms, and how do the two allies' Pacific policies compare more broadly? Since WWII, the two countries have at various times acted in concert in the Pacific, with sometimes Australia and sometimes NZ taking the lead (see Baker 2015). The two allies cooperated regarding the establishment of regional organisations such as the South Pacific Commission and, in the context of decolonisation, the South Pacific Forum (the later PIF). They also cooperated on various regional initiatives and were both engaged in 'strategic denial' in the Cold War era, seeking to make sure that external powers, most importantly the Soviet Union, did not gain a foothold in the region (Fry 2019, pp. 171–180). And they cooperated in the 1990s and 2000s, 'an era of hegemonic regionalism' (Fry 2019, 314), to bring the regional economic and security order into greater alignment with their interests, for example by jointly pursuing a regional free trade agreement.

Yet it is also true that attention to Pacific affairs has waxed and waned in Canberra and Wellington over the years. Schultz notes that Australia's engagement with PICs since the 1980s has been 'characterised by periodic phases of idealism and invigorated engagement interspersed with longer periods of disillusion and neglect' (Schultz 2014, 551). Relatedly, Varrall speaks of the 'mercurial nature' of Australia's approach to the region, 'oscillating between neglect and intervention' (Varrall 2021, 123, 131). This attention/inattention cycle has mirrored broader developments in the international system such as decolonisation, the Cold War (and its end) and the US-led 'war on terror'. Taking an even longer-term perspective, Herr and Bergin note that the 'strategic importance of the Pacific Islands has been determined by the extent of great power interests since the first European contact' (Herr and Bergin 2011, 12). China's growing presence in the Pacific and the response to it by traditional powers fits into that picture.

At the regional level, the advent of crises, often triggered by intrastate conflicts, also led to Australia and NZ paying more attention to the Pacific. Last but perhaps not least, the foreign policy interests and of individual governments on both sides of the Tasman – plus the inclinations of the political leaders involved – have impacted Pacific policies. Notably, Labour politicians such as NZ's Prime Minister (PM) Norman Kirk (1972–1975) and Australia's PM Bob Hawke (1983–1991) sought to advance Pacific institutions and issues (Baker 2015, 140).

The massive Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) or the concerted push for regional free trade agreements notwithstanding, the Pacific was not the uppermost foreign policy priority in Canberra and Wellington for most of the new millennium's first two decades. During this time of relative neglect, the People's Republic of China (PRC) emerged as a major player in the Pacific. China's interest in the region had

initially been triggered by the competition with Taiwan over diplomatic recognition, with the Pacific becoming a particularly important arena once the global momentum had begun to shift in favour of the PRC (Atkinson 2010).

The new millennium's first two decades saw increased Chinese diplomatic and economic resources being devoted to the Pacific. This reflected China's rapid economic growth and burgeoning appetite for natural resources, the 'going global' of Chinese companies as well as Beijing's more proactive foreign policy and related geo-economic designs – most notably the Belt and Road Initiative, whose maritime segment was extended in 2015 to cover the Pacific (Wesley-Smith 2013; Nicholas 2021). Beijing's diplomatic initiatives as well as growing trade, investment, development cooperation and tourist flows (see Zhang 2020, 86–92; Noakes 2021, 3–7) have been welcomed by PICs interested in diversifying their external linkages and related opportunities (Wesley-Smith 2013, pp. 366–370; Taylor 2019).

Canberra and Wellington had both initially welcomed China's presence in the South Pacific – and even encouraged it to help PICs become more self-reliant economically (Wallis and Wesley 2016, 31). However, concerns within foreign policy and strategic circles began to mount in the mid-2010s. Perceived issues included: 'unwise' Chinese-funded large-scale projects not meeting local needs ('vanity projects'); doubts about the quality and sustainability of Chinese infrastructure projects ('roads to nowhere') plus their possibly detrimental effects on the good-governance thrust of Australia's and NZ's own development cooperation; the growing dependence of some PICs on Chinese concessional loans (also framed as 'debt diplomacy') and the potential implications of such loans in terms of undermining PICs' sovereignty. Added to this was anxiety about a Chinese military presence in the region ('dual-use naval bases') (Author interview 2020c; Varrall 2021, pp. 112–120; Wallis and Powles 2021, 1061).

Since the late 1990s, governments and businesses in both Australia and NZ had fully embraced the economic opportunities provided by China's growth and the increasing prosperity of its citizens. In the latter half of the 2010s, however, the mood began to shift, with Australia, followed by NZ, engaging in major resets of relations with the PRC. These recalibrations reflected concerns over undue interference in domestic politics and public life, as well as over China's increasingly assertive foreign policy – most visibly in the South China Sea (McGregor 2019; Medcalf 2019; Köllner 2021). Australia's and NZ's recent Pacific policy initiatives have been in tune with their policies directly concerned with China. Arguably, they represent two sides of the same coin. Certainly, Australia's and NZ's Pacific policy recalibrations were motivated to a large extent by China's growing regional presence – which also presented a challenge to the two traditional powers' own standing and influence in the South Pacific.

Australia's step-up

Yet another 'turnaround' in Australia's Pacific policy commenced in September 2016 when then-PM Malcolm Turnbull announced at the PIF summit a 'step change' towards the region (Varrall 2021, 124). The new initiative was spelt out in the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper; Australia had to 'step up [its] efforts to support a more resilient Pacific. A diverse and evolving set of national security threats requires strong defences at home and resolute action abroad to keep Australia safe, secure and free' (Australian Government, 2017, v).

Notably this was DFAT speaking, not the Department of Defence. The statement was in line with the increasing overall 'securitisation' of Australian foreign policy (see Wilkins and Bromfield 2019, pp. 590–592). DFAT argued that closer economic and security links with the region were in Australia's own interests, and that cooperation with NZ was required:

> [M]ore ambitious engagement by Australia, including helping to integrate Pacific countries into the Australian and [NZ] economies and our security institutions, is essential to the long-term stability and economic prospects of the Pacific. Our partnership with [NZ] will be central to advancing this agenda. (Australian Government, 2017, 8)

Under Turnbull's successor Scott Morrison, what was hence called the 'Pacific Step-up' became a full-fledged, well-resourced foreign policy initiative. Morrison outlined the directions of the new policy at a military garrison, Lavarack Barracks in Queensland, in November 2018. With the Step-up, he said, the Pacific returned

> to where it should be – front and centre of Australia's strategic outlook, our foreign policy, our personal connections, including at the highest levels of government. This is our patch.[2] This is our part of the world. This is where we have special responsibilities. [...] We are more than partners by choice. We are connected as members of a Pacific family. (Morrison 2018)

Dobell suggests that the choice of venue was not coincidental but rather reflected 'Australia's deepest, oldest instinct in the South Pacific [...], strategic denial, striving to exclude other major powers from the region' (Dobell 2020, 6). Defence assistance to PICs has been a very important pillar of Australia's Pacific policy since the 1970s. Australia's Defence Cooperation Program (DCP), reflecting Canberra's 'strategic interest in being the principal security partner of [Papua New Guinea, PNG] and the other Pacific Island states' (Wallis 2017, 128), has involved training, personnel exchange, infrastructure support, education courses, capacity-building and the delivery of 22 patrol boats to 12 PICs between 1987 and 1995 (see Wallis 2017, chapter 4). Building in part on existing DCP activities, Morrison enumerated in this 2018 policy speech the many security-related components of the Step-up, including:

- the establishment of a Vanuatu-based Pacific Fusion Centre charged with aggregating, analysing, and disseminating information concerning regional security threats;
- the provision of national-security and law-enforcement training for mid-level officials from the Pacific, courtesy of a new Australia Pacific Security College at the Australian National University;
- delivery of bigger patrol boats to the region and engagement in aerial surveillance, both under the Australian Pacific Maritime Security Programme (PMSP)[3];
- the transformation of the Blackrock Camp in Fiji into a regional hub for police- and peacekeeping training;
- bilateral security agreements with Solomon Islands and Vanuatu;
- the development of the PNG Defence Force's Lombrum Naval Base, jointly with PNG and the US;
- the establishment of a rotational Australian Defence Force Pacific Mobile Training Team to train and engage with other forces in the Pacific;
- more regional deployments of the Royal Australian Navy to conduct maritime training exercises with neighbouring countries; and

- the deepening of people-to-people links with Pacific security forces, including annual meetings of defence, police and border-security chiefs.

Australia's Defence Strategic Update 2020 emphasised that strategic competition, primarily between the US and China, would be the principal driver of strategic dynamics – not only in the broader Indo-Pacific but also in Australia's 'immediate region', ranging from the 'north-eastern Indian Ocean through maritime and mainland South East Asia to [PNG] and the South West Pacific' – thus including PICs (Australian Government, 2020, p. 11). The update also noted that defence planning had to be aligned with government initiatives such as the Step-up.

Defence and security cooperation figure prominently in the Step-up, but the policy initiative also involves increased development cooperation and people-to-people exchanges with the region. Relevant activities announced since 2018 (see DFAT, n.d.; Varrall 2021; pp. 125–127) include:

- increased ODA to the Pacific, reaching AUD 1.44 billion in the 2020/21 financial year[4];
- building an ODA-financed Internet cable in the Coral Sea, outbidding Huawei;
- establishing the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific, able to draw on AUD 2 billion in loans and grants;
- making available AUD 1 billion for Export Finance Australia, whose remit was extended to overseas infrastructure and to making equity investments;
- introducing a new Pacific Labour Scheme, allowing low- and semi-skilled persons from the Pacific to work in rural Australia;
- promoting exchanges among churches, non-governmental organisations and in sports;
- opening six new embassies/high commissions in Micronesia and Polynesia, bringing the total number in the region to 19, allowing Australia to claim the largest diplomatic presence of any country in the Pacific;
- establishing a coordinating 'Office of the Pacific' and doubling DFAT staff working on the Pacific to about 175 full-time equivalents (Parliament of Australia 2020b, 8–9);
- significantly intensifying high-level-visit diplomacy.

Symbolically, Morrison's first overseas visitors were the PMs of Solomon Islands, Fiji, and PNG. His own first official visit took him to Solomon Islands meanwhile, where he announced a bilateral 10-year, AUD 250 million infrastructure programme.

New Zealand also recalibrates its Pacific engagement

NZ presented its Pacific policy initiative a few months after the forming of a new centre-left coalition government led by PM Jacinda Ardern. Developing the 'Pacific Reset' had been an iterative process.[5] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) had been working for some time on a new Pacific framework that would tie the foreign policy and development streams of its work there more closely together. The Pacific also figured prominently in regular consultations between the Australian and NZ foreign ministries at the level of deputy secretaries. But it was the new government that provided impetus, some fresh thinking and, importantly, made available a multi-year budget providing the policy with some 'bandwidth' (Author interview 2020b, 2020d).

Then-foreign minister Winston Peters announced the Reset in March 2018 in Sydney, thus underlining the government's interest in aligning the relevant efforts of the two Australasian allies. The strategic challenge of China's growing regional engagement to the traditional regional powers Australia and NZ provided a core motivation for the Reset (Author interview 2020e; Iati 2021, pp. 145–147). Reflecting the strong geostrategic impulse of the Reset that contributed to the substantial convergence of Australia and NZ's Pacific policies during the Labour-NZ First coalition government (2017–2020), Peters (2018) also called later that year on the US to reinforce its activities in the Pacific.

Differences in size and available resources notwithstanding,[6] the Reset shared some characteristics with Australia's Step-up: it involved a substantial increase of ODA to the region, rising over four years by NZD 714 million. Already in 2018 over 70% of NZ's ODA went to the Pacific (NZ House of Representatives 2020, 12). The Reset also involved the establishment of 14 new MFAT posts in the region and beyond (development-cooperation posts in Beijing, Brussels, New York, Tokyo). MFAT staff working from Wellington on Pacific affairs increased to 80 strong (compared to 17 five years earlier) and high-level political exchanges were intensified (Cabinet Office 2018; Author interview 2020d). Like Australia, NZ has also provided substantial assistance to PICs since 2020 to help them deal with the health-related and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic – for example in terms of funding vaccines and providing budget support (Parliament of Australia 2020b, 1–3; NZ House of Representatives 2021, 3–4).

Differences between Australia's and NZ's Pacific policies: security and migration

The alignment of the recent policy recalibrations and their important similarities in terms of substance notwithstanding, there are significant longer-term differences between Australia's and NZ's Pacific policies. A first major difference concerns the security dimension. Wellington's Pacific policy is overall less heavily hard security-oriented than Australia's. This is not to say that security issues have not been integral to NZ's earlier or current Pacific policy. In fact, the Reset reflects an understanding that NZ and Pacific security are fundamentally 'one and the same thing' (Author interview 2020d). In the context of the Reset the South Pacific has officially been placed on the same level as NZ's own territory with respect to the NZ Defence Force's operational readiness (New Zealand Government 2018a, 3). This matters, for example, with respect to responding to requests for help from PICs hit by cyclones (Author interview 2020a). Climate change, one of the 'complex disruptors' affecting regional security (New Zealand Government 2018a, 6), will likely lead to higher-intensity cyclones and the need for more humanitarian and disaster-relief operations. Such operations will be made easier by increased air and sealift capabilities as well as improved aerial and maritime-domain surveillance capacity. Relevant NZ military-procurement priorities were outlined in the 2019 Defence Capability Plan (New Zealand Government 2019a). New assets will include four state-of-the-art P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircrafts, the biggest NZ defence procurement item in decades. A main rationale for their purchase is to increase interoperability with Australia and other security partners further afield.

Different from Australia, climate change has featured very prominently in NZ's more recent defence thinking on the Pacific. In fact, every official NZ defence document published in 2018 and 2019 dealt with climate change, inter alia discussing what it means for the posture of the NZ Defence Force, its equipment and for cooperation with Pacific partners (New Zealand Government 2018a, 2018b, 2019a, 2019b). This focus indicates a comprehensive understanding of security, which also helps to explain why, since Ardern became PM in 2017, the Green Party has lent its support to the government's defence policy and the, by NZ standards, massive investments it entails. Yet, the focus on climate change in recent defence documents goes beyond mere 'greenwashing' aimed at making big-ticket procurement items palatable to the Green Party. It reflects broader policy changes in NZ concerning climate change adaptation and mitigation. In 2019, the parliament in Wellington passed, with bipartisan support, the Climate Change Response Amendment Act. This bill set the framework for cutting net emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) – except for biogenic methane – to zero by 2050 (Parliamentary Counsel Office, 2019).

The NZ government now faces the difficult task of implementing effective measures to curb net emissions, i.e. measures that go beyond buying carbon credits internationally. So far, NZ's domestic actions fall short of what is required[7] and it remains to be seen whether the needed very substantial measures will draw support across the aisle. Still, in terms of rhetoric and stated aims the Ardern-led government sings from the same songbook as PICs when it comes to climate change. For PICs, the latter constitutes the single-biggest security threat they face. The Boe Declaration on Regional Security, issued at the 2018 PIF summit, captures this reality. It affirms that 'climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the people of the Pacific and our commitment to progress in the implementation of the Paris Agreement' (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat 2018).

Another important difference between Australia and NZ's Pacific policies concerns migration from the region. A sizeable part of NZ's population originates from the Pacific. Australia's Pacific population, on the other hand, is miniscule. This is connected to the different trajectories of migration and migrant-labour regimes in the two Australasian nations which will be discussed in the next section. Here I just note the stark difference between Australia and NZ in terms of their Pacific populations. According to Wellington, NZ's 'Pacific identity' is underpinned by (the claim to) being a Polynesian country. While Australia and NZ share Anglo-Celtic settler roots, NZ's settler experience also involved an earlier period of Polynesian settlement which underlies Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural identity. A 2018 Cabinet Paper states that NZ

> is linked by history, culture, politics and demographics to all parts of the Pacific. There is greater porosity and interconnectedness between [NZ] and the countries of Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau and Tonga than any others in the world, with the partial exception of Australia. This has profound implications for [NZ's] domestic and foreign policy settings. (Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs 2018, 2)

Geography, constitutional commitments to the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau, and its sizeable indigenous Māori population (originating from the Pacific) aside, NZ's claim to being not only 'in' but 'of' the Pacific also derives from the fact that *tagata Pasifika* ('Pacific peoples') constitute the country's fourth-largest ethnic group. They are expected to make

up 10% of the total population in 2026, up from 7.4% in 2013 (Powles 2018, 171).[8] Pasifika are by now well represented in parliament, especially in the Labour caucus (New Zealand Parliament 2020). The substantial Pacific diaspora has often been referenced when government officials and others frame NZ as being a more Pacific country and more in tune with the region than Australia is (see Goldsmith 2017).

NZ's sizeable Pasifika population contrasts with the small size of Australia's equivalent demographic segment. According to the 2016 census, only around 200,000 people – or less than one percent of Australia's total population – originate from the Pacific. Interestingly, that group is dominated by Polynesian communities whose members found their way to Australia in many cases via NZ (Parliament of Australia 2020a, 6). Australia's nearest Melanesian neighbours PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, on the other hand, are today seriously underrepresented – even though Melanesian countries have a much bigger resident population collectively than the Polynesian ones do (around 11 million versus approximately 600,000). More Australians claimed Cook Islands than PNG ancestry in 2016 – despite PNG's population being around 500 times larger than that of the Cook Islands (Batley 2018).[9]

Whence the differences in terms of security and migration?

As noted, the Pacific policies of the two Australasian allies diverge in terms of Australia's more pronounced traditional-security focus and with respect to migration. Where do these differences come from? A useful starting point are the respective geographical settings and related historical linkages of Australia and NZ with the Pacific underlying their subregional emphases and outlooks on the region.

Different subregional foci and historical experiences

Australia and NZ are both linked geographically and historically to the Pacific. Yet different subregions thereof have traditionally been of greater concern to the two countries, resulting for several decades in varying intensities of governmental attention paid to these subregions. Due to its geographical position and three oceans-spanning natural environment, Australia borders several world regions, including the Pacific to the north-east. Australia's closest neighbour is PNG, while other Melanesian countries are situated geographically closer than Polynesian or Micronesian peers. The Pacific subregion closest to NZ, meanwhile, is Polynesia to the north-east. Indeed, for many New Zealanders 'the Pacific' has meant in geographic and cultural terms predominantly the Islands of the Pacific Ocean – and specifically those of Polynesia. The Australian gaze (and imagination), on the other hand, has rested more on the 'south-western sector of the Ocean which includes Melanesia and particularly [PNG]' (Howe 2000, 4–5).

Australian views of the region have been shaped, at least in part, by the historical experience of having fought a series of campaigns in the region during WWII, with the New Guinea offensives of 1943–44 being the single-largest series of connected military operations the country has ever mounted (Stanley 2021). Moreover, the region served as the basis for Japanese bombing raids on Australian territory during the war, culminating in the bombing of Darwin in February 1942 – sometimes also referred to as Australia's

'Pearl Harbor'. No such memories colour NZ's views of the Pacific, as the fighting in WWII never came close to home territory, with NZ armed forces being mainly deployed in the European and North African theatres instead (Salesa 2009, pp. 163–164).

The two Australasian countries also colonised different parts of the region, with Australia administering what became independent Nauru and PNG in 1966 and 1975 respectively. In terms of Australian and NZ 'subjects' in the region, numbers differed too – and so did racial prejudices. Pacific historian Kerry Howe argues that:

> Australia's Pacific has been a rather more disconcerting region, with its large 'black' Pacific populations as nearby neighbours as opposed to [NZ's] more distant, smaller and 'brown' populations to come to terms with, a consideration that has profoundly influenced both [NZ's] and Australia's respective perceptions of themselves in their distinct Pacific locations. (Howe 2000, 5)

NZ's direct rule in Polynesia extended to the Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau and today's Samoa,[10] with the former three still constituting part of the Realm of NZ. The Cook Islands and Niue are self-governing states but freely associated with NZ (including dual citizenship and the delegation of external affairs responsibilities to NZ), while Tokelau remains a dependent territory. Far more Cook Islanders, Niueans and Tokelauans live in NZ than their original homes. NZ's administration of (then Western) Samoa ended in 1962, but their ongoing 'special relationship' includes a preferential migration regime which forms, in conjunction with earlier Samoan arrivals, the basis for NZ's substantial Samoan diaspora (Ratuva and Brady 2019, pp. 147–151).

Herr and Bergin noted a decade ago that the 'legacy of the colonial experience still has an influence on the colonialists' continuing interest in the region' (Herr and Bergin 2011, 30). This does however not mean that other parts of the region have not been of interest to Australia and NZ – as testified, for example, by NZ's involvement in Bougainville in the late 1990s or the substantial share of its ODA going to Melanesia. Nevertheless, Australia's strong linkages to Melanesia and NZ's to Polynesia mean that the two countries have been mostly concerned with parts of the region facing since decolonisation different situations in terms of state fragility, internal security, and the volatility of political systems. In places like PNG/Bougainville, Solomon Islands or Fiji, Melanesia has seen a significant number of episodes of acute internal tension, armed conflict and/or military coup. In the late 1990s and first decade of the new century, Australian policymakers and strategists framed Melanesia (plus East Timor given the violent crisis there in 1999) as being part of an 'arc of instability', paving the way for Australia's 'age of intervention' in that region and culminating in RAMSI. Until 2013, when it transitioned to being an aid and policing programme, RAMSI saw Australian and other military forces deployed to help restore order and security in Solomon Islands.

RAMSI ended in 2017, but Australia's Pacific security activism has continued under a slightly different guise – as indicated by the Step-up's strong focus on traditional security issues. The ongoing 'securitization of the Pacific' (Wallis and Wesley 2016, 28), which poses issues in terms of threats to national security, has included the use of development aid for security purposes – a prime example being the earlier-mentioned ODA-funded Internet cable in the Coral Sea. Wilkins and Bromfield date the increasing securitisation of aid back to midway through the first decade of the new millennium, when 'global jihadism and the danger of failing states in the region shifted Australia's

approach to aid to one that sought to manage the spill-over [of] risks' (Wilkins and Bromfield 2019, 594). Whereas instruments have remained the same, the strategic discourse has shifted from risks connected to transnational crime and terrorism to the perceived political – and potentially even military – challenge posed by China's presence in the region.

The idea of the Pacific forming part of an 'arc of instability' did not hold much sway in NZ (Ayson 2007, pp. 220–221). This is perhaps not surprising given that the country's main area of concern, Polynesia, has experienced – some local riots and other problems notwithstanding –, far fewer 'troubles' than Melanesia. NZ's view of the Pacific has thus tended to be more benign than Australia's (Ayson 2006, 256). In a similar vein, Howe suggested some 20 years ago that NZ's

> concept of an ideal Pacific has been untroubled and unchallenged. This is because [NZ's] Polynesian-centred Pacific does not pose any great threat or opportunity. Australia, on the other hand, is much more consciously influenced by its proximity to Melanesia, Indonesia and Southeast Asia and thus has some rather different political, economic and strategic priorities. Its neighbouring Melanesian countries, particularly [PNG], are variously regarded as either a threat in themselves or ramparts against, or stepping stones for, its potential Asian enemies [. . .]. And [these countries] are very resource-rich, which brings both problems and possibilities. (Howe 2000, 6)

Both geographical settings and historical experiences then have contributed to divergent Australian and NZ views of and security perspectives on the Pacific and a much more pronounced sense of direct vulnerability on the part of Australian defence planners (Ayson 2006, 245).

Different degrees of militarisation and alliance ties

NZ defence planners, on the other hand, lack Australia's sense of direct vulnerability, not least due to the sheltering of NZ's territory by Australia's landmass. Its geographic setting allows NZ to spend much less on hard security than Australia. Even if policy-makers in Wellington were inclined to adopt a similarly strong focus on traditional security in the Pacific, they would be very much constrained by NZ's limited military means. The Global Militarisation Index (GMI) – based on indicators such as military spending in relation to gross domestic product (GDP) and health spending – gives an idea of respective degrees of 'militarisation'. The 2020 GMI situates Australia among the medium-militarised countries of the world, at rank 65 (of 151 countries) with an overall score of 151. In contrast, NZ can be found in the fourth quintile, at rank 109, with a score of 108 (Mutschler and Bales 2020, 11). NZ spends far less in relative and absolute terms on defence than Australia. Whereas the latter spends more than 2% of GDP on defence, the NZ figure is around 1%. In the 2021/22 financial year Australia's defence budget amounts to AUD 44.6 billion (USD 34.8 billion) and is thus more than nine times larger than NZ's one (NZD 5.2 billion, USD 3.7 billion) in the same year (Kerr 2021; Grevatt 2021).

Australia and NZ also differ in terms of alliance ties. The two states are allies, but Australia's much more important military partner is the US. NZ's own alliance with the US broke down in the mid-1980s over the former's non-nuclear policy – though bilateral security and intelligence ties increased again in the past decade. Australia's securitisation

of the Pacific, and the strong focus on conventional security issues there, also needs to be understood in terms of its ties with the US. As Wilkins and Bromfield, referencing Gyngell (2017), aptly summarise:

> Canberra has been a resolute diplomatic supporter of US foreign and strategic policy in a bid to ensure its own national security through the maintenance of US primacy in Asia [. . .]. This is enshrined in Australian defence thinking as necessary 'payment of an alliance premium' to assuage 'fear of abandonment'. (2019, p. 597)

An unwritten part of the alliance deal with the US has been the 'outsourcing' of policing Oceania to Canberra and Wellington under ANZUS (Wesley 2020, 193, 194). According to Wesley, the two Australasian allies' strategic-denial policies during the Cold War served 'both national defence planning and alliance obligations', adding that strategic denial 'has remained central to Australian defence planning for over 40 years' (Wesley 2020, 195). Wellington has been much in alignment with that policy, though it sided in the 1980s over the non-nuclear issue with Pacific states while Australia remained with the US and thus within the alliance. Given Australia's far greater military resources, it has taken care of related heavy lifting in the Pacific. Compare, for example, Australia's multibillion-dollar spending on patrol boats to NZ's formerly three, and courtesy of the Reset, now four defence advisers in the South Pacific who are accredited to eight PICs (Author interview 2020a; Cabinet Office 2020, 1–3).

As Wallis and Wesley note, alliance politics have been 'a major, but often overlooked shaper of Australia's approach to order in the Pacific' (Wallis and Wesley 2016, 26). Wesley (Wesley 2020, 200) suggests that the main audience for the Step-up (and the Reset) has actually been the US government rather than PICs. Regardless of whether that is the case, Australia's 'securitisation' of Pacific policy is clearly not just home-grown and based on the country's military capabilities, but also reflects its alliance with the US and the commitments this entails. For both Canberra and Washington, the Pacific forms part of the aforementioned 'Indo-Pacific' – today's major arena of strategic competition with China. Ameliorating militarised security concerns in the Pacific thus comes first for Australia, as Varrall (2021, 128) notes, whereas PICs themselves emphasise environmental and human security – with climate change seen as the number-one threat to the region. Varrall thus warns that the 'distinctly differing conceptions between Australia and [PICs] about what the ultimate threat to security is means that Australia's approach threatens to undermine the very goals it is aiming to achieve' (Varrall 2021, 131).

Different migration pathways for Pacific people

As noted, Australia's and NZ's Pacific populations differ widely in terms of relative magnitude. Different migration pathways in the two countries underlie these differences. Whereas only slightly more than 2,000 Pacific people lived in New Zealand in 1945, their number had grown more than a hundred-fold to close to 300,000 by 2013 (Salesa 2017, 11). Around 30% of Pasifika in 2013 were Cook Islanders, Niueans and Tokelauans enjoying free access to NZ by virtue of their dual citizenship (Ratuva and Brady 2019, pp. 147–149). Large numbers of Samoans have also migrated to NZ since the early twentieth century. Samoans do not enjoy the right to automatic NZ citizenship, but a preferential migration regime is in place. Since the year 2000 the Samoan Quota Scheme has existed,

under which 1,100 Samoans are annually granted NZ residence. According to the 2013 census more than 144,000 people born there lived in NZ, making it the largest Samoan diaspora in the world (Ratuva and Brady 2019, 151).

Since 1984, Pacific communities in NZ have even had their own ministry: the Ministry for Pacific People. Salesa argues that the ministry 'may be small and underfunded but its presence signals a commitment and legacy that dates to its formation under the Fourth Labour Government [1984–1990], adding that 'most Pacific policy has been generated and implemented by Labour governments' (Salesa 2017, pp. 167–168). Health and education aside, signature policies driven by Pacific people-related agendas have included NZ's apology to Samoa for its colonial past, the country's nuclear-free policy and the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme (ibid., p. 168).

The RSE scheme forms part of NZ's programmes for both permanent and temporary migration from the Pacific. Easy access for people from Realm countries and the Samoan quota aside, NZ also has a Pacific Access Category Resident Visa scheme: essentially a (vastly oversubscribed) annual visa lottery under which currently 75 Kiribati citizens, 75 Tuvaluans, 250 Tongans and 250 Fijians (plus their partners and young dependents) gain rights to reside in the country. Eligibility for the annual ballot is confined to Pacific people from the named countries aged 18 to 45 years old, who need to find employment in NZ to retain their visa (Herr and Bergin 2011, 66; Howes 2019). This 'Green Card'-style migrant-labour scheme has opened an additional pathway for Pacific Islanders to permanently migrate to NZ. It is complemented by the above-mentioned RSE scheme, which commenced in 2007. The scheme allows NZ's horticulture and viticulture businesses to recruit workers from nine PICs for seasonal work. The scheme was originally capped at 5,000 places per year but has since grown to 14,400 (New Zealand Immigration n.d.).

In contrast, in Australia there are no distinct pathways to permanent residence for Pacific people. In line with the White Australia policy, most Pacific Islanders working as indentured labourers in Queensland and New South Wales were deported in the early years of the early twentieth century 'in an effort to "racially purify" the new Australian nation [...]. The Pacific Island Labourers Act of 1901 authorised these deportations and banned further recruitment after 1903'. (Australian Human Rights Commission n.d.) The Holt government quietly started to dismantle the White Australia policy in 1966 but parliamentary and cabinet-level discussions in 1966 and 1968 about getting people from the then-administered territory of PNG to Australia led nowhere (Dobell 2020, 22). Even when the Whitlam government in the early 1970s officially replaced the White Australia policy by a non-discriminatory migration regime, special access to Australia for Pacific workers remained taboo. After PNG's independence in 1975, Australia's Pacific policy 'became about diplomacy, defence and aid – not the people who were the responsibility of [the] newly independent nations [in the region]' (Dobell 2020, 22).

Only in the middle of the first decade of the new century would the Howard government, faced with pressure from both PICs and domestic farmers experiencing labour shortages, follow NZ's lead and start a pilot scheme for up to 2,500 seasonal workers per year from Tonga, Kiribati, Vanuatu, and PNG to work in Australia's horticultural industry (Herr and Bergin 2011, 65). The scheme was made permanent by the Rudd government in 2012 as the Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP), growing to cover 12,000 workers by the late 2010s. According to the Australian government (DFAT, n.d. b), the SWP has provided more than 40,000 seasonal jobs to workers from

the Pacific (and Timor-Leste). As part of the Step-up, the Australian government added in 2018 the Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS), open to all PICs, and initially allowing 500 workers from the Pacific to be employed in regional areas for up to three years (Howes 2019).

Over a period of 15 years, the Australian government has thus gone 'from a position of opposing the provision of targeted labour mobility opportunities to a position of actually promoting them' (Stephen Howes, quoted in Parliament of Australia 2020a, 2). Still, the SWP and the PLS are essentially modest schemes in terms of numbers and involve problems in terms of family separation and bureaucratic demands on sending countries (Howes 2019).[11] Moreover, they have not led to new pathways for permanent migration and will thus do nothing to boost the Pacific diaspora in Australia. Repeated recommendations by Australian academics and the World Bank to copy NZ's residence visa lottery for Pacific Islanders have not been heeded, having been dismissed as 'too radical' by the Australian government (Howes 2019; see also Herr and Bergin 2011, 65–66).

Parliamentary hearings on Australia's relationships with PICs saw in 2020 again suggestions made to copy NZ's lottery scheme (Parliament of Australia 2020a, 2, 7). Yet, whether the Australian federal government will create permanent migration pathways for Pacific islanders remains to be seen. The de facto absence of regular permanent-migration options might well remain a sticking point in Australia's relations with PICs. Pacific leaders have also not forgotten that Australia has used the region as a dumping ground for unwanted refugees, having put them for years under its 'Pacific Solution' and 'Operation Sovereign Borders' schemes in detention camps in Nauru and on Manus Island. As Dobell notes, Australia continues to 'struggle [. . .] with the people dimension of its Pacific policy' (Dobell 2020, 20).

The NZ government has been critical of Australia's offshore detention centres and offered as early as 2013 to accept 150 of the refugees in question. Yet, trans-Tasman negotiations on the subject were still underway in early 2022 (Patterson 2022). More generally, NZ governments face substantial (and growing) political incentives to cater to the interests and needs of Pacific people given the size of the Pasifika population in NZ and their now sizeable parliamentary representation. Whereas Australian governments do not have to worry about domestic pushback against Pacific policies that are either negligent or substantially shaped by (perceived) security imperatives, NZ governments do not have that luxury. Demography matters not only for domestic politics but also for foreign policy.

Conclusions

Throughout the twentieth century Australia and NZ played a central role in shaping the Pacific Islands region, first as colonisers and later as regional powers engaged in region-wide initiatives. The emergence of China as an important new regional actor has challenged the traditional dominance of the two Australasian allies in the Pacific. Driven by strategic anxieties about China's growing engagement, Australia and NZ recalibrated their Pacific policies in the late 2010s. In essence, Australia and NZ have sought to counter China's regional engagement, signalling to PICs their desire to remain partners of first choice.

Going beyond the many similarities reflecting shared interests, I explored in this article how and why Australia's and NZ's broader Pacific policies differ. In line with earlier literature on the two allies' regional and security policies, I found that the interplay of different geographic settings and historical linkages does contribute to divergences in Australia's and NZ's outlooks on and approaches towards the region. A paired comparison, juxtaposing the two countries' Pacific policies, put these differences into starker relief.

I explored differences with respect to security and migration in greater depth. With respect to the first, I argued that the strong traditional-security focus in Australia's Pacific policy is not only based on the country's larger military resources and its alliance with the US but also reflects its greater sense of vulnerability given geographic and historical linkages with Melanesia, standing in contrast to NZ's traditionally more unburdened focus on Polynesia. Turning to migration, I traced the very different Pacific population profiles of the two Australasian states back to NZ's much greater openness to permanent migration from the region, reflecting both constitutional obligations and the development of distinct migration pathways for Pacific people. These differences are of a structural kind and will not disappear in the short to medium term.

Going forward, several avenues for research on Australia and NZ's Pacific policies can be identified. One way forward could seek to identify the distinct channels, coordinative and communicative actions through which the (partial) alignment of Australia's and NZ's recent Pacific policy recalibrations was achieved. Doing so would contribute to a better understanding of foreign policymaking in both states. Another way forward would be more theory-driven and understand the recent Pacific policy calibrations as instances of foreign-policy signalling. Notably, Australia and NZ's recent Pacific policy initiatives went beyond 'cheap talk'. The two Australasian partners put money where their mouth was. Canberra and Wellington offered more development cooperation, beefed up their diplomatic presence on the ground, and engaged in intensified high-level political exchanges with PICs. These overtures have been costly in monetary terms or in terms of opportunity costs.

The theoretical, mostly game theory-centred, literature on foreign policy signalling[12] assumes only costly signalling to be credible and thus potentially efficacious. Though sometimes referencing Jervis's seminal work on perception and misperception in international politics (Jervis 1976), the literature has surprisingly little to say on what the targeted receivers of foreign policy signals – or, for that matter, other audiences – make of such signals. How PICs and others have perceived Australia and NZ's recent Pacific policy initiatives thus constitutes both empirically and theoretically a worthy topic for future research. Alternatively, focussing on the sender side, the more recent literature on status signalling in international relations[13] could be harnessed to explore whether Australia and NZ's recent Pacific policy calibrations pursued not only instrumental objectives in terms of deepening ties with PICs in and across various domains but were also intended to signal the two Australasian countries' desire to defend their status as regional powers.

Focusing on the NZ side of things, a final avenue of research could tackle the question of just how the growing number of Pasifika members of parliament in NZ has contributed to shaping the country's Pacific policy, which needs to balance Pacific connections with ties to the US and Australia. A connected, longer-term question is whether this constituency will be instrumental to establishing a truly Pacific-centred approach to the region. Clearly, the future study of Australia and NZ's Pacific policies promises rich analytical returns.

Notes

1. The author is grateful to one of the reviewers for suggesting this point.
2. References to the (South) Pacific as Australia's 'patch' predate Morrison. Former Prime Minister John Howard, for example, used the very same term in 2003 (Lawson 2017, pp. 222–223).
3. Under the PMSP, succeeding the earlier Pacific Patrol Boat Program, Australia committed in 2014 to delivering and servicing over the next 30 years, at a cost of AUD 2 billion, a total of 21 Guardian-class patrol boats gifted to 12 PICs and Timor-Leste (Wallis 2017, 135).
4. These increases have occurred in the context of otherwise massively reduced Australian ODA flows (see Howes 2020).
5. In late 2021, under the Labour government which had emerged out of the 2020 NZ general election, the Reset transitioned to a 'Resilience' framework. For an early assessment see Powles (2021).
6. NZ's population of 5.1 million is dwarfed by Australia's close to 26 million people. According to World Bank data (https://data.worldbank.org), Australia's economy GDP was in 2020 more than six times larger than NZ's, measured in US dollar terms. According to the OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] (2021, 9), NZ's spending on ODA in 2020 was in relative terms higher than Australia's (0.27 versus 0.19% of GNI), with both, however, scoring well below the OECD average of 0.41%.
7. For example, in late 2021 the independent Climate Change Tracker rated the NZ government's overall climate actions and measures as 'highly insufficient' (see https://climateaction tracker.org/countries/new-zealand/).
8. On NZ's longstanding cultural and population links to the Pacific, see Ratuva and Brady (2019, 146). For critical discussions of NZ's 'Pacific identity', see Goldsmith (2017) and Powles (2018, pp. 170–172).
9. For detailed figures on Australia's Pacific population, see Dobell (2020, 21).
10. Together with Australia and the United Kingdom, NZ was also involved in the administration of Nauru.
11. For PICs' perspectives on the opportunities and problems related to seasonal-worker schemes, see Parliament of Australia (2020c, 6, 19, 27).
12. For an overview of the literature see Gartzke et al. (2017).
13. Pu (2019, chapter 1) provides a good overview of the literature.

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