



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Crossing Boundaries, Connecting an Ocean: New Zealand, Latin America and the Blue Pacific

About this document

1. This document specifies the Terms of Reference for delivering research services into the opportunities for New Zealand and Latin American governments and organisations to collaborate in engaging with the 'Blue Pacific' continent that lies between them and connects them.

Background

2. The South Pacific is becoming an increasing focus of international attention, as the costs of climate change are revealed, geopolitical tensions grow, and development aspirations are voiced. Eighteen months ago, too, the leaders of the Pacific Island Forum endorsed a *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* (as the region is increasingly called)¹ in response to the challenges and opportunities around the sustainable management of the lands and seas of this vast maritime domain. This long-term strategy seeks to guide how "countries and territories, communities, and people" will "work together ... to secure our region's future against the challenges of today and the coming decades, to achieve a free, safe and prosperous region".²
3. New Zealand's home is in the South Pacific, and its connections to this region are multiple; as one of our Foreign Minister's first speeches on taking up his portfolio again showed, the 'vast blue continent' is of great importance to our government.³ Less well known to many New Zealanders, however, are the links between the region we now call Latin America and the ocean whose eastern shores their region borders. In pre-European times, Polynesians sailed to the South American coast, where they acquired the kūmara and spread it throughout the South Pacific. In the 19th century, Chile aspired to be a naval power in the sea to their west, and annexed Easter Island (Rapa Nui); tragically, also, Pacific Islanders were kidnapped for forced labour in Peru (and later Mexico and Guatemala) as well as being sent to in plantations in Oceania. A century later, flights linked Easter Island, continental Chile and Argentina with Tahiti. In the last two decades, Cuba has sent doctors to South Pacific countries, trained their medical students, established an embassy in Fiji, and joined many South Pacific states (and the Dominican Republic) in the UN's Small Islands and Developing States group. And in recent weeks, Chile has announced plans (with Google) for a submarine cable to Australia that passes through French Polynesia. Complementing these actual links also are the potential for Latin American initiatives like the Eastern Tropical Marine Corridor partnership between Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Panama to be models for governance across multiple Pacific jurisdictions.

¹ As defined by the Pacific Island Forum, 'The Blue Pacific is the world's largest oceanic continent, made up of a grouping of Pacific island countries and territories engaged in innovative and unique initiatives that show leadership toward strong regional ocean governance and the sustainable management and conservation of the ocean and its resources.' See <https://www.forumsec.org/2017/06/07/the-blue-pacific-pacific-countries-demonstrate-innovation-in-sustainably-developing-managing-and-conserving-their-part-of-the-pacific-ocean/>.

² Pacific Island Forum, '2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent', <https://www.forumsec.org/2050strategy/>.

³ Rt Hon Winston Peters, 'Keynote Address to the United States Business Summit', 30 November 2023, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz>. In a further signal of the South Pacific's priority status for our new government, the Minister's first offshore visit was to Fiji.

4. Other trans-Pacific ties connect the two regions with New Zealand. Millions of years before the kūmara reached Aotearoa, the microcontinent Zealandia⁴ and South America were both part of Gondwana; today, too, New Zealand and individual South Pacific or Latin American nations sit on the Pacific Ring of Fire, El Niño/La Niño climate patterns of the eastern Pacific affect them all, and the royal albatross flies over the waters between New Zealand and South America. In pre-colonial times, furthermore, the Polynesian triangle reached to Aotearoa, Rapa Nui and Hawaii; from the 15th to the 19th centuries, European navigators, whalers, settlers or traders sailed to or from our shores through South America as well as the South Pacific; and fifty years ago New Zealanders themselves had to transit through Tahiti and Easter Island when flying to or from Santiago or Buenos Aires. In the mid-to-late 20th century, also, New Zealand and nations in both regions joined the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea or APEC, or protested French nuclear testing at Moruroa. In 2012, a return journey of two waka houroa (double-hulled canoes) was completed between Rapa Nui and Aotearoa. And today New Zealand and Chile have adjacent search and rescue zones and attend the annual meetings of South Pacific Defence Ministers; Chile and Cuba are dialogue partners of the Pacific Islands Forum New Zealand is part of; all three countries plus Peru, Ecuador, Panama, the Cook Islands and Vanuatu are in the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation; and several Latin American ambassadors in Wellington are cross-accredited to Pacific island capitals.
5. The Latin America CAPE has assessed that research into how New Zealanders, Latin Americans and Pacific Islanders can work together on approaches to the Blue Pacific Region could
 - i) raise awareness of the extent of interests shared by New Zealand, Latin America and South Pacific societies;
 - ii) uncover new opportunities for beneficial partnerships across the breadth of the South Pacific;
 - iii) support the objectives of the 2050 Blue Pacific Roadmap;
 - iv) weave Latin American nations into wider Pacific regional discourses; and
 - v) help align New Zealand policies approaches the South Pacific and Latin America in original, transformative and cost-effective ways.

Scope of Research

6. The research being commissioned will show how the peoples, governments or organisations of the societies we now call New Zealand, Latin America and the South Pacific have previously interacted or interact today, then explore the potential for deeper collaborations between them in the future. It will discuss why these opportunities exist and the benefits they could bring to specific actors. Barriers that have restricted greater engagement between and within the rims of the South Pacific (including divisions inherited from colonial times) will be discussed, but arguments will also be offered as to why these barriers need not continue to limit fruitful partnerships between the peoples of the western, central and eastern parts of this ocean.
7. The report will be informed by consultations by the chosen contractor with the CAPE and an Advisory Group of academic, official and other stakeholders. The report would first be presented to the CAPE in draft form. Once approved it will be released to the New Zealand public in full or partial form through a launch event or events.

⁴ Though largely submerged, Zealandia included today's New Zealand and New Caledonia.

8. The audiences for this research will include businesses, industry groups, government agencies, the academic and science communities, Māori and Pacific peoples, media commentators, and groups and individuals interested in international affairs – primarily in New Zealand but also in Latin America and the South Pacific. The report will not make specific recommendations about policy settings.
9. Focus areas for its research will include climate change and sustainable fisheries management, and could also cover:
 - Ocean acidification and biodiversity
 - The resilience of island environments
 - Disaster management and responses
 - Collaboration in multinational forums
 - Disarmament and peace
 - Regional security and defence
 - Freedom of navigation
 - Drug trafficking and transnational crime
 - Regional organisations and unity
 - Regional trade
 - Peru's APEC Year
 - The Pacific Alliance
 - Supply chains and logistics
 - Infrastructure and connectivity
 - Innovation and entrepreneurship in SMEs and MSMEs
 - Tourism
 - Aid and development
 - Indigenous values
 - Cultural connections and exchanges
 - Educational exchanges
 - Sport, and
 - Rapa Nui-Māori links.

Outputs

1. A report suitable for publication and public release by May 10th 2024 which meets the prior approval of the CAPE and responds to feedback from the Advisory Group.
2. Data underpinning the findings annexed or otherwise supplied to the satisfaction of the CAPE.
3. Contributions to promotional material and events launching the report between May 20th-23rd.

Timeline

1. *Selection and orientation of author*

- a. The Latin America CAPE sends this this document to prospective authors and announces this research opportunity in social media posts and the CAPE's monthly newsletter (January 30th-February 2nd)
- b. Prospective authors submit their bids by February 14th.

- c. The CAPE selects the project author and Advisory Groups by February 16th.
 - d. The author meets the CAPE and Advisory Group members between February 19th-29th.
2. *Production and consideration of first draft*
 - a. The author submits their draft report to the CAPE and Advisory Group members by April 2nd.
 - b. The Advisory Groups send their feedback to the CAPE by April 11th.
 - c. The CAPE meets with the author by April 12th.
 3. *Submission and approval of final report*
 - a. The author sends a revised draft to the CAPE by April 26th.
 - b. The CAPE requests any final changes by April 30th.
 - c. The author responds to the final requests and submits the final report on May 10th.
 4. *Launch*
 - a. The CAPE launches it publicly (with author involvement) between May 20th-23rd.

Budget

The Latin America CAPE seeks costed proposals which should not exceed **NZ\$40,000** plus GST. Joint submissions from more than one organisation are welcome.

Deadline for receipt of proposals

The deadline for receipt of proposals is **4pm, Wednesday February 14th**. Proposals should be sent to matthew.omeagher@vuw.ac.nz

For further information

Further information may be obtained from Dr Matthew O’Meagher, the Latin America CAPE Director – cell 022 067 0322 or email matthew.omeagher@vuw.ac.nz