



## **It's Our Future: TPPA News Bulletin #80**

**17 December 2015**

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**And there are lots of ways to take action – Sign a petition to the Governor-General; declare your place a TPPA Free Zone; tell Labour you want them to be clear about opposing the TPPA; planning for the regional tour; say good riddance to Tim Groser; and prepare for anti-signing action on 4 February.**

## TPPA Latest

### National government plans to host TPPA signing on 4 Feb

The NZ government has offered to host a ministerial meeting of all 12 countries to sign the deal. We believe that will happen on 4<sup>th</sup> February next year. The government is hiding behind the same old secrecy, but Fran O'Sullivan says it is in Auckland. Put the date in your diary. More details about actions to come!

### Kiwis against the TPPA

In successive polls, Kiwis have rejected the TPPA. A stunning TV3 Reid Research poll revealed that a majority of NZ voters reject the TPPA. The coverage said that 52% rejected the TPPA (some people didn't have an opinion, and the rejection was over 60% of those who expressed an opinion). 73% of Labour supporters were against it (is Andrew Little listening?), 84% Greens and 87% NZ First. Even 23% of National Party supporters were against the TPPA. That's an amazing result especially as it came after a month of media carrying the government's PR and spin while we couldn't see the final text. Then last week, 97.5% voted no to TPPA in an online referendum run by the people's 'Real Choice'.

### TPPA looking shaky

The TPPA is looking very shaky in the US – it is being opposed by senior Republicans and Democrats, including some of those who voted for Fast Track Authority for the President. It is also opposed by front-running political candidates from both parties. As a result, the vote may be postponed until after the US elections (in November 2016), they might try to re-open negotiations or it may never be approved. It is important to know that there are still many ways that this agreement can be defeated.

### Waitangi Tribunal challenge set for March 2016

The Waitangi Tribunal has granted an urgent hearing on the TPPA in mid-March. It will focus on 2 questions: does the Treaty of Waitangi exception really protect Maori as the government says it does, tested against several scenarios; and what process should the Crown be adopting with its Treaty partner in relation to the TPPA.

### **Gear up for the submissions process**

If the government signs, the TPPA will be sent to a Parliamentary Select Committee for review. The government can ignore what the committee says but it is still a really important way to send a message to both National and Labour. The committee doesn't have to call for submissions but it will. It may also hold hearings around the country if there is enough demand. We are already preparing guides for submissions, Again, watch this space.

### **Groser fobs off Official Information Act obligations**

The High Court ordered Trade Minister Groser to revisit his refusal to release TPPA documents under the Official Information Act. He waited to the last possible minute to say he wasn't going to appeal, but couldn't decide what if anything he would release until 5 February 2016 – the day after he aims to sign the deal. The Court recognised this was really frustrating but didn't have enough basis to order the Minister to act more promptly, So the cat and mouse game of secrecy continues.

### **Local Government Action**

TPP Action in Dunedin on the 14<sup>th</sup> December and both Upper Hutt and Porirua on the 16<sup>th</sup> December addressed the respective Councils in regard to the Greater Wellington Regional Council decision of 4<sup>th</sup> November and following the 18<sup>th</sup> November letter to all Councils. Jen Olsen with the support of Sir Alan Marks (Wise Response) and Stuart Mathieson and a few more in the public gallery spoke to the Dunedin meeting. Here is the news story from the Otago Daily Times.

## The Trade and Climate Change nexus

As expected, the Paris Agreement on climate change was signed without any clauses to stop climate actions from being blocked by trade agreements like TPPA. The contrast between the two agreements demonstrates the real priorities of government and big business. The Paris Agreement on climate change has 31 pages, and its actions are largely voluntary and non-binding. The TPPA has 6194 pages and contains thousands of binding and enforceable provisions. The result? Trade rules as [this](#) article shows.

There was a meeting of international trade and climate campaigners on Paris, together with Naomi Klein, to coordinate strategies and build a longer term campaign for transformational change. More on the global campaign to come later.

## Analysis of the TPPA text

Jane Kelsey and Barry Coates are coordinating a series of research papers, revealing the details buried in 6000+ pages of the TPPA text. These research papers are authored by leading academics or experts, peer reviewed and referenced. They are a credible source of information. Be warned, they are not light reading! Short advocacy papers will be prepared by Action Station on the basis of the research, for release in January. See the release of the first papers [here](#).

**A guide to the TPPA's processes:** The first expert paper from Jane Kelsey [explains the processes](#) in NZ and the US if the TPPA is signed, how the US can pressure other countries to make more concessions, what has to happen before the agreement can come into force, and how its processes can fetter our regulatory sovereignty.

**Legal analysis of investment chapter:** The expert [paper on investment](#) by Amokura Kawharu provides a technical assessment of the chapter and how it increases the risks New Zealand faces under the TPPA.

Research papers on Labour, the Environment, Local Government, Economics, Internet/E-commerce, Health, Public services, Finance and te Tiriti are underway and will follow in December/January.

### **Good Riddance Groser**

The Minister of Trade has sold us out in the TPPA negotiations (and in climate negotiations). As a reward, has been posted to an important diplomatic post in Washington. Gordon Campbell's article [here](#) suggests we will be a diplomatic disaster in the role.

### **Take Action!**

#### **Petition to the Governor-General**

A petition has been launched to request that Governor-General commands the government to hold a binding referendum on the TPPA. It is clear that a majority of the population of our country don't want the TPPA – we need to keep up the pressure for a referendum of the most important issue facing our country (not the flag!). Sign on to the petition. There is a full explanation of the petition and resource materials [here](#).

#### **TPPA Free Zones**

Declare your home a TPPA Free Zone, or get your workplace to do so, your community centre, marae, youth centre, sports club, or wherever. This has been a powerful way to build a movement in past campaigns against nukes, the MAI etc. Download the logo [here](#).

#### **Pressure on Labour**

A strong opposition to the TPPA needs the largest opposition party to be active and consistent. See Jane Kelsey's open letter to Andrew Little [here](#) explaining how

the TPPA abjectly fails ALL of Labour's five tests and click [here](#) for information on how to contact your Labour MP. We are planning a postcard campaign in the New Year to ensure that Labour doesn't vote for the TPPA in the Select Committee and in Parliament.

### **“Stop the Signing” Tour**

We have plans for a speaking tour in the 10 days leading up to their proposed signing on 4 Feb with Jane Kelsey, Barry Coates, and hopefully a leading activist from the US. We will be in touch with local organisers and send out details as soon as details are settled. The dates are likely to be in the period 25-31 January in major cities.

### **Summer of Campaigning**

I hope you're able to take action at beaches, in parks, at events, and in your communities over the summer. Look out for the next Bulletin after the New Year with more actions to come to build a strong voice across our country against the TPPA. Have a great Xmas and New Year!

Send any suggestions or feedback to me at [barrycoatesnz@yahoo.com](mailto:barrycoatesnz@yahoo.com) and please let me know if you can help out with our planned website re-vamp and design of campaign actions.

**TPPA – it's not over. Don't sign!**

## **TPPA in the News**

Petition to the Governor-General

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO1512/S00191/tppa-free-and-action-groups-petition-the-governor-general.htm>

Real Choice results of the referendum

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO1512/S00085/new-zealanders-vote-no-to-the-tppa.htm> and then they took the results into Parliament

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO1512/S00127/question-time-interrupted-by-democracy.htm>

Senior Republicans change their minds on the TPPA

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/mcconnell-warns-that-trade-deal-cant-pass-congress-before-2016-elections/2015/12/10/b8151f26-9f66-11e5-8728-1af6af208198\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/mcconnell-warns-that-trade-deal-cant-pass-congress-before-2016-elections/2015/12/10/b8151f26-9f66-11e5-8728-1af6af208198_story.html)

Or are the Republicans just trying to get a better deal through side letters?

<https://ourfuture.org/20151214/dont-be-misled-tpp-still-coming-full-steam>

There are huge pay-offs involved <http://www.mintpressnews.com/211853-2/211853/>

As if the TPPA isn't bad enough, leaked documents from the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) negotiations reveal a further push to undermine democratic rights <http://www.world-psi.org/en/great-climate-change-swindle>

And the WTO ruled against the US rights to use country of origin consumer labelling for meat products [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lori-wallach/wto-orders-sanctions-unle\\_b\\_8748594.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lori-wallach/wto-orders-sanctions-unle_b_8748594.html)

For story-telling about the TPPA's health impacts in New Zealand, see Erik Monasterio's address to the Association of Salaried Medical Specialists

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdNK1pBTVig>