

# REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE IN THE PACIFIC

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## **Abstract**

Regional integration processes comprise an important element of the current international global and regional policy. Participation in these processes becomes a part of political and economic attitudes, and/or it expresses these attitudes and positions and significantly affects the political, economic and security situation of the participating states. The paper provided comprises a first part of the sequent papers devoted to this new tendencies and developments in the region. The main goal of the paper is to analyse the recent changes after 2015 occurred within the regional architecture represented by one of the most prominent regional intergovernmental organisation, the Pacific Islands Forum with a research question whether these “new- era” regional actors and tendencies reflect the needs and challenges of the PICs better than the PIF before. The methodology of the paper is based on study of official statements and policies of the most prominent regional organisations after having defined the transregionalism here as a rising point for the analysis.

**Key words:** *regionalism, organisation, Pacific, Fiji, development*

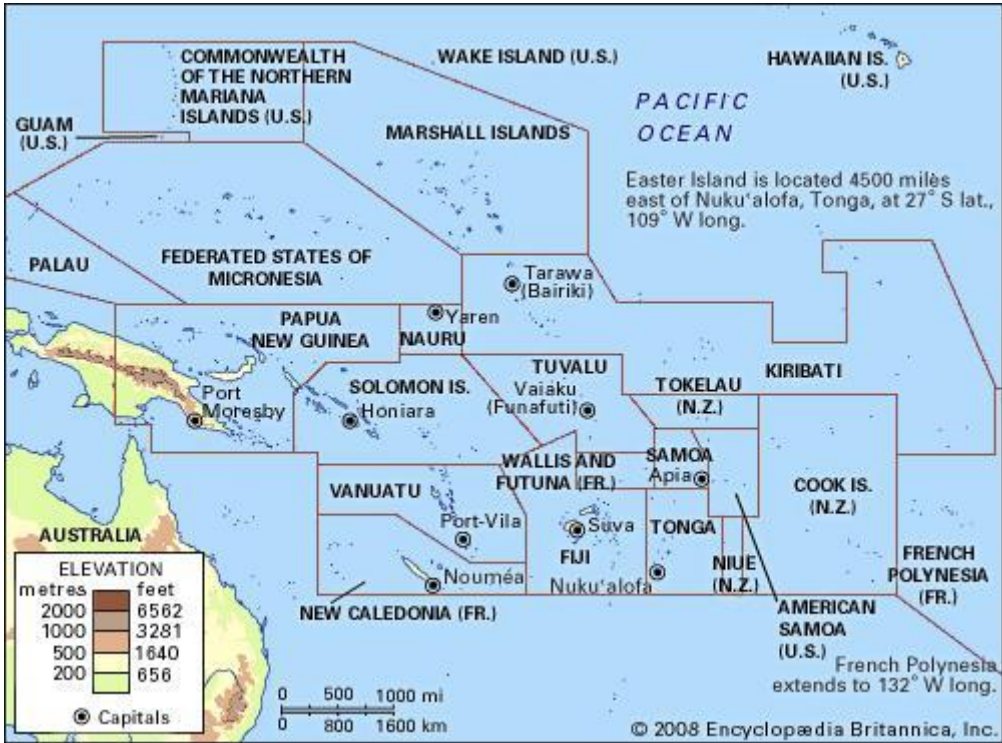
## **INTRODUCTION**

The intensive development of regionalism and regional integration processes have been observed since the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly in connection with the fall of the Iron Curtain and the end of the Cold War, which brought about significant changes and challenges in international relations. Since the late 1980s, world has witnessed the revival of regionalism and regional integration processes. In many regions of the world, old regional organizations are revitalized and new regional groupings (as well as Pacific) are at a rapid pace.

Historically given cultural and economic ties in the Pacific are now taking on new dimensions due to the increasing migration of PICs population especially to the New

Zealand.<sup>1</sup> It is the granting of citizenship to the inhabitants of these islands as well as the granting of the right of residence to increased migration to New Zealand (mainly from the islands of Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau) that has significantly contributed to the increased intra-regional migration targeted mainly to New Zealand. In addition, residents of the islands of Samoa, Fiji or Tonga, who are not New Zealand's citizens, and who are therefore more responsive to the migration, have been significantly involved in periodic cycles, depending on the actual composition of the government (or the ruling party), i.e. implementation of individual government migration policies. The Pacific region, because of the interesting dynamics of its development in the recent decades (since the 70s of last century, i.e. the changes in the New Zealand's national policy on minorities) became the centre of investigation by professionals from different fields who share examining the development of New Zealand's position (i.e. Miller 1995, Perry - Webster 1999, Butcher 2012) as a key player in the region as the country also declared herself in official documents (Statement of Intent 2008–2009, 12)<sup>2</sup> and even in the nation- branding campaign (Bell 2005, 15, 19; Butcher 2012, 249–273) having a direct impact on the whole region as migration control should be seen as one of the stabilising policies in the region interjoined to other non-military threats. (see e.g. Ďurcina, 2011)

**Map 1:** Map of the Pacific Islands



Source: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Pacific-Islands>

<sup>1</sup> see data based on 2006 Census in New Zealand available online at: [http://m.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/population/Migration/internal-migration/pacific-mobility](http://m.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/population/Migration/internal-migration/pacific-mobility); <https://www.teara.govt.nz/en/pacific-islands-and-new-zealand/page-2>

<sup>2</sup> see more: <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Countries/Pacific/Cook-Islands.php>; Pacific Focus Global Reach | 2013 Year in Review: New Zealand Action for International Development. Available online at: <http://www.aid.govt.nz/media-and-publications/publications#yir>; Annual Reports. NZ Aid. available at: <http://www.aid.govt.nz/media-and-publications/publications/year-review-2012>

Concerning the methodology of the paper, the 'Pacific' refers here to the island countries across the Pacific Ocean, and the Pacific Island Countries (hereinafter referred to as PICs; see Map 1 below) are 14 states as Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu and the remaining dependent territories of France (New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, and French Polynesia), Britain (Pitcairn Island), New Zealand (Tokelau) and US (American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). Pacific states are generally grouped into three cultural sub-divisions –Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia, and as by Henderson (2004: 17). "Although these labels date from the colonial era, the terms have been readily adopted by Pacific island governments."

Regionalism is currently considered to be a trend of political and partly economic development that seeks to organize the world on the basis of regional association. (Hettne, 2008: 403) In order to answer the research question, it is necessary to note that on the global level, it is a matter of politics in which both state and potential non-state actors in the region try to co-operate and coordinate their activities in pursuit of their objectives in the specifically defined areas (as proved by the recent developments in the Pacific). In the current global politics, we can identify a specific subject of research represented by regional organizations as one of the types of international organizations (as by Hasenclever et. al, 1997: 10-11) observing and analysis the most common characteristics and principles they are built on (compare e.g. new open regionalism in Asia-Pacific and cultural intraregionalism in the Pacific or intra-regionalising processes in Europe from their effectiveness point of view, i.e. as the goals are truly reflected in the politics and thus, how these actors really contribute to the development of that particular region).

One of the important principles of defining an international organization is the **geographical area** defined by the respective region. On the theoretical level, one can come across a number of approaches to defining "regionalism" of the grouping or association of states. One of them is by Russett defining the phenomenon of regionalism of an international organization by the following characteristics: organisation proving socio-cultural homogeneity, similarity of attitudes and behaviour, political interdependence, economic interdependence, and naturally by a geographic proximity of the members. (Archer 2001: 11) The above provide with a range of assessments pointing to the peace and depth of the regionality of individual international associations, state communities, etc.

In my opinion, term '**Pacific trans-regionalism**' may be understood as cooperation of various stakeholders in Pacific region in global forums and multilateral regional forums in the meaning of taking a joint action by all the PICs in solving the challenges of the region as environmental issues, trade and business problems and all security aspects issues performed by so-called Pacific diplomacy as characterized by Tarte & Fry in their book devoted to the New Pacific Diplomacy as "*a dramatic new developments in Pacific diplomacy at sub-regional, regional and global levels, and in the key sectors of global negotiation for Pacific states – fisheries, climate change, decolonisation, and trade.*" (2015: 4) Diplomacy as a tool of international relations of any stakeholders does reflect, in my opinion, the whole process of transformation and evolution of the Pacific region and its representatives

themselves, gradually leaving the colonial representation in favour of being represented by the most significant actors, as middle-power Australia and New Zealand having the Pacific focus in its foreign-policy objectives and intents as set by a small state (mainly position and “Pacific” politics held by Australia may be given as one of the reasons for the recent Pacific developments; see more on coup in Fiji in 2006 and regional impacts e.g. McCarthy, 2007 or Markovic, 2009).

These regional powers backed-up establishment of the two prominent regional organisations, as the Pacific Islands Forum and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC; and a number of smaller organisations)<sup>3</sup>, having a position of founding members here. Turbulent development in the region evoked by specific characteristics of the region itself, has brought a new era also in regional cooperation and communication among the PICs leaders as noted by Tarte & Fry (2015:3) that “*Since 2009 there has been a fundamental shift in the way that the Pacific Island states engage with regional and world politics. The region has experienced ..... a ‘paradigm shift’ in ideas about how Pacific diplomacy should be organised, and on what principles it should operate. .... This change in thinking has been expressed in the establishment of new channels and arenas for Pacific diplomacy at the regional and global levels and new ways of connecting the two levels through active use of intermediate diplomatic associations.*” It would be suitable to include into term “Pacific regionalism” also understanding of region-wide accepted standards, principles, norms as well as the practices gained from the colonial past and developed in the post- colonial era to enhance and develop regional cooperation and communication of these contested territories.

## **1. BEGINNINGS OF THE PACIFIC REGIONALISM – STORY OF CONTESTED TERRITORIES**

I do agree with Spoonley (2000, 12) that “....*transnationalism signals that significant networks exist and are maintained across borders, and, by virtue of their intensity and importance, these actually challenge the very nature of nation-states*”, as in my view it is impossible for transregionalism to be developed without any gradual establishment of communication channels, whether technical means or (in my opinion more fundamental and important) building and “nourishing” of living and effective links among the various stakeholders in the region. This is significant also in the activities of the Pacific Islands Forum organization, the main idea of which could be the **Leaders Vision in the Auckland Declaration, April 2004**, saying:

*“Leaders believe the Pacific region can, should and will be a region of peace, harmony, security and economic prosperity, so that all of its people can lead free and worthwhile lives. We treasure the **diversity of the Pacific** and seek a future in which its cultures, traditions and religious beliefs are valued, honoured and developed. We seek a Pacific region that is respected for the quality of its governance, the sustainable management of its resources, the full observance of democratic values and for its defence and promotion of human rights.*”

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<sup>3</sup> Cooperation has been facilitated by the Council of Regional Organisations (CROP) which brings together the nine principal regional organisations.

*We seek partnerships with our neighbours and beyond to develop our knowledge, to improve our communications and to ensure a sustainable economic existence for all."*

(<http://www.forumsec.org/pages.cfm...>)

These words confirm relevance and significance of cultural aspect of the whole intra-regional processes. The ideas expressed above are politically also reflected in development assistance provided to the PICs by New Zealand and Australia, too (see: <http://www.forumsec.org/pages.cfm/strategic-partnerships-coordination/framework-for-pacific-regionalism/pacific-plan-3/?printerfriendly=true>) as some of the PICs are classified as developing countries (see below) facing many economic and also non-economic problems and challenges which eventually may dis-balance the whole regional surrounding if not solved by the most prominent state actors there, as Australia and New Zealand. This is also the reason of being engaged in negotiations with global institutions and thus making advocacy for the PICs globally by the above state-actors.

As above mentioned, significant support for mutual cooperation as well as for cooperation with various international stakeholders in the region is underlined by the fact that 11 out of 15 Pacific countries are small island developing countries (hereinafter referred to as LDCs; small according to their population below or around 250,000 inhabitants) (Mauritius Declaration and Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation..... 2005). For this reason, a network of regional organizations and institutions have been set up in the Pacific to play an important role in addressing development challenges.

The story of regionalism in the Pacific began, after launching the decolonisation process here, with the South Pacific Forum. It was established to enhance the cooperation of the PICs on a joint bases as well as a representative and the "Pacific voice-promoter" worldwide. Establishment of this organisation was also joined with one significant moment from international law point of view, i.e. that some Pacific Island Countries (hereinafter referred to as PICs) were granted their full independency (for example after the Westminster Statute Acts) and thus enable to perform and develop their own foreign policy and actions but international capacity of many of the PICs stayed rather limited in various forms. The South Pacific Forum was then transformed then to the above Pacific Islands Forum (hereinafter referred to as PIF), a political grouping of 16 independent and self-governing states<sup>4</sup> and consequently the name was changed in 2000 to the Pacific Islands Forum **to better reflect the geographic location** of its members in the north and south Pacific (including Australia; the organisation holds a position of a UN observer).

As by Heyes, *"PIC opposition to French nuclear testing, symbolic of imperialism in the Pacific, acted as a rallying point for the new organisation. Mobilised by this issue, PIF successfully enacted a series of international treaties on resource protection and tuna access, prohibitions on fishing and the dumping of radioactive wastes in Pacific waters, as well as placing New Caledonia under the oversight of the UN Decolonisation Committee. Many consider PIF's initial success waned, with the*

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<sup>4</sup> Its members include Australia, Cook Islands, FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, NZ, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, and number of the observers.

*organisation's lack of progress on action against climate change –in many ways this century's equivalent to nuclear testing – illustrative of this.” (Heyes, 2014)*

The above makes a reason for New Zealand, along with Australia, to support regionalism in the Pacific by the **2005 Pacific Plan** (see below) thus providing significant support to these regional organizations in the Pacific.<sup>185</sup> As provided in document titled “The Framework for Pacific Regionalism” (2014:11-12), when the *“Leaders first endorsed the Pacific Plan in 2005, they decided that it should be a living document – one that would be updated and reviewed regularly. Initially, four “pillars” for the Pacific Plan’s strategic objectives were identified: economic growth, sustainable development, governance, and security. In 2009, the focus of the sustainable development pillar was expanded to recognise and include two emerging issues: responding to climate change, and improving livelihoods and well-being.”*

In this context, it should be stressed that the role of regional organizations is key as they usually associate individual PICs with Australia and New Zealand, opening-up them new opportunities to address their problems along with other developing countries. For this reason, these organizations are important, for example, in various multilateral negotiations, for example on the environment, sustainable development, organised crime or fishery. During the last decades, the Pacific governments contributed to establishment of a new of regional organisations and groupings (latest development see below) as The Pacific Islands Forum (PIF); The Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA); the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC); the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP); the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC); The University of the Pacific (USP); South Pacific Tourism Organization (SPTO); Pacific Island Development Programme (PIDP).

One of the most important development initiatives in this region is the **Pacific Partnerships for Development 2008** initiated by Kevin Rudd in order to increase Australia and New Zealand's share of development aid for the PNG and other PIC countries (Port Moresby Declaration 2008). In his “RUDD’S VISION FOR THE PACIFIC”, Rudd called his new Pacific development policy the **‘Port Moresby Declaration’** and this new policy framework comes under the Pacific Partnerships for Development.([http://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_...](http://www.aph.gov.au/About_...)) In 20 points of the Declaration Australian government bound itself to encourage development of the region as a beginning of a new era of cooperation with the island nations of the Pacific. As given in the Declaration, e.g. in para 13: „Australia is also committed to linking the economies of the Pacific island nations to Australia and New Zealand and to the world, including through pursuing a region-wide free trade agreement and enhancing other private sector development opportunities. This will help to secure a sustainable and more prosperous future for the region. “ continuing with section

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<sup>5</sup> Such international or non-governmental organizations active in the Pacific are, for example, the Asian Development Bank, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, UN Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations Development Programme; UNESCO, United Nations Fund For Population Activities, Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research Foundation for the South Pacific, International Ocean Institute of the South Pacific, South Pacific Action Committee for Human Ecology and the Environment, World Wide Fund for Nature, as well as the World Bank or World Health Organisation or The United Nations Environment Programme, The Alliance of Small Island States, and various bilateral donor organisations. (see e.g. [http://www.bilaterals.org/article.php3?id\\_article=27](http://www.bilaterals.org/article.php3?id_article=27))

14: as ..., the Governments of Australia and New Zealand will work more closely together and with our partners to coordinate our development assistance to the Pacific. ...we can improve the impact of our development assistance and provide better results for the people of the Pacific islands“, stressing then the partnership and significance of the most prominent regional organisation saying that in section 16 “Australia is committed to close and strong relationships with our Pacific neighbours and with regional organisations, particularly the **Pacific Islands Forum...**“ stressing thus that a central element of the Prime Minister’s *Port Moresby Declaration* is the intention to pursue “**Pacific Partnerships for Development**“ with Pacific island countries. This Partnership was aimed at economic goals as improving economic infrastructure and enhancing local employment possibilities through infrastructure and broad-based economic growth as well as enhancing private sector development, but also at social and political goals focused on global and far-reaching development of PICs rooted in the UN Millennium Goals as achieving quality universal basic education; better access to basic health services; enhancing governance, including the role of civil society, and the role of non-government organizations in basic service delivery.

The above steps taken under this initiative was to help the countries to meet the United Nations Millennium Goals. This partnership was to help implementing the commitments made by Australia and New Zealand resulting from the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (Paris declaration on aid effectiveness. 2005; AAA 2008) adopted by the OECD and Accra Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), which is a supporting document for the Paris Declaration to Support the Development of Low-Income Countries.

In 2015 a **new Pacific plan** was announced (reviewed in 2013; see: <http://www.pacificplanreview.org/>) as a new impulse in cooperation in the Pacific itself – through conclusion of the Pacific Plan within **The Pacific Forum** to address common issues from a regional perspective focused mainly on **regional trade and economic issues** as good governance and security agenda (which are the more recent ones in understanding mainly as a non-military security) and on the goals set up within the previous Plan, as economic growth, sustainable development of the region, regional trade, environment, etc. (see more at: <http://www.forumsec.org/>) The Organisation launched the above Pacific Plan, as a complex of policies taken in various areas as economic growth and sustainable development of the region; regional trade and also issues of human and social security as the environment, social policy and research, and the most visible and media promoted actions taken in the aid provision.

Australia and New Zealand are not the only relevant state actors active in the region literally building the regional architecture. In my opinion, also global actions taken by the most influential global actors (as the US and Russia) comprised in a large scale also the changed conditions here, in the Pacific reflected in recent developments analysed here; therefore a short explanatory introduction should be provided to keep in eyes Fiji’s actions and Leaders’ decisions. As stated by Henderson in his paper on The Future of Pacific Regionalism: A New Zealand Perspective on an Unfinished Agenda (2004: 12), the recent US politics focused mainly on Middle East Actions, rebuilt the regional architecture in the South Asia - Pacific opening a room of some anew actors as **China** which is extending its

influence in the Pacific using wide-effective and long-term profitable diplomatic tools. As by Henderson, increased number of China's diplomats in the South Pacific predominantly supports the country's activities in the region developing a new form of diplomacy, a "visit" diplomacy enhancing a "summit regionalism" focused on inviting the PICs leaders to China building and developing mutual net of contacts. These new tendencies in the region are identifiable in my opinion in the last decade also due to increased interest of the ASEAN organisation for an "organisational" cooperation in a region-wide perspective. The Obama administration has tried to turn its attention to the Pacific again, highlighting the important role played by these peoples in the complex and dynamic conditions of the regional strategic environment. Similarly, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, H. Clinton, emphasized in her speech the historical heritage of the Pacific and its strategic role played in particular in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As highlighted by this speech, the region is of fundamental importance for Asian-Pacific regional stability and US common interests in various areas such as climate change mitigation, energy security, sustainable fishing and biodiversity protection. (Clinton, 2010; Campbell, 2010)

In her earlier speech in Honolulu, Secretary Clinton discussed the administration's efforts to resume relations in the Asia-Pacific region. She identified five principles of America's ongoing engagement in the area, with the help of bilateral relations, to develop further partnerships and dialogues with regional players to form regional organizations in order to develop economic development and democracy, thereby ensuring that regional institutions are effective and goal-oriented. According to Clinton, increased US engagement has taken place in a complex and dynamic regional context, and so the US approach to restoring their engagement in this area must be diverse, highlighting the key role of a number of Pacific Island institutions, stressing mainly US relations to Fiji and Papua New Guinea, key actors in the recent development leading in the below paradigm shift.

## **2. NEW PACIFIC REGIONALISM AND A PARADIGM SHIFT**

As provided in document titled "The Framework for Pacific Regionalism" (2014:11-12) and as also discussed even in 2004 by Henderson (2004: 13, 23), "*over the years there have been periodic calls for the establishment of a Single Regional organisation (SRO) with the Pacific Island Forum taking the lead role....*".

**The Pacific Plan Review process** was launched in 2012 as the Pacific Leaders called for a comprehensive review of the Pacific Plan having recognised that over the years elapsed since the Plan was adopted, the region had undergone considerable development, and a "*change in the approach to regionalism was needed to respond to these contextual shifts*". (The Framework for Pacific Regionalism; 2014:11) The working team was led by Rt. Hon. Sir Mekere Morauta, a former Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, and the new draft was called **Mekere plan**. The team performed consultations in all the Forum member and associate member countries not only on governmental level, but also on non-governmental ones as the talks were held not only with the governments but also with the private sector and NGO and research partners active in development. The conclusions were necessary for supporting **deeper regionalism and better regional-level outcomes**.



When presenting The final Review report was then delivered in December 2013 at the Forum Officials Committee meeting, Mekere called for a complex review of the Plan confirming formally the seen developments in the PIF when stating “*we see a region that is at a crossroads and one that needs regionalism more than ever before*” and concluding that the future of the Pacific Plan should be as “*a framework for advancing the political principle of regionalism through a robust, inclusive processes of political dialogue, the expression of political values about regionalism and sovereignty, and the decisive implementation of key, game-changing, drivers of regional integration.*” (The Framework for Pacific Regionalism; 2014:12) His final report led to Forum Leaders’ Decisions to recast the Pacific Plan as the Framework for Pacific Regionalism in 2014 followed by the consultations undertaken by the Secretariat around the region to prepare **the Framework for Pacific Regionalism** with the three key objectives as “to broaden the conversation on regionalism beyond that of CROP agencies (i.e. Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific), which were (often correctly) perceived to dominate priorities under the Pacific Plan; to ensure regional initiatives had a sound rationale, ...; to ‘bring back’ the political dimension of regionalism, which many argued had been lost under the technocratic Pacific Plan. .” (The Framework for Pacific Regionalism; 2014:12; Dornan- Cain 2015:1) Currently, PIF is guided by the Pacific Framework for Regionalism.

For Dame Meg Taylor, as Secretary General, the Framework is ‘*about changing the paradigm of the way development is done in the region, where **the leaders of the Pacific are the ones that make the decision as to what are the regional priorities.***’, as said in her interview with the DevPolicy Blog called “Regionalism, sub-regionalism and women’s empowerment: an interview with Dame Meg Taylor“. (2015) It is clear that Taylor is calling for a renewed focus on regionalism in the Pacific.

Answering the research question, it is required to give that this was not the only development within the Pacific regionalism mirroring the changing surrounding of the region. Reviews of regional organisations and plans/processes in the last 10 years included 2013 Independent Review of the Pacific Plan for Regional Integration and Cooperation (the ‘Pacific Plan’); the 2012 reviews of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat; the 2007 Regional Integration Framework review - led to the merger of a number of major regional agencies; the 2005 review of the regional architecture commissioned by Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS).

Recent developments are joined with the so- called ‘new’ Pacific diplomacy associated with Fiji’s activist foreign policy since its suspension from the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in 2009. (Tarte & Fry, 2015: 6) when the Fiji government introduced i.e. the idea of including civil society, the private sector, and dependent territories, alongside independent governments, as equal partners to a new kind of ‘**network diplomacy**’. In my opinion, it was possible to see this process expressed in a series of major initiatives as in giving leadership to a renaissance of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG); in creating the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF); and by strengthening the existing Pacific Small Island Developing States at the UN as a Pacific Island-only grouping where it replaced the PIF as the main representative of the Pacific voice at the UN. And the shift recognised here is as noted by Tarte & Fry, it is important to note the “*wider support for these new*

*institutions and ideas across the region as evidenced in the support for a new array of Pacific-controlled institutions*” called the “**new Pacific diplomacy**”, as a term denoting a new diplomatic architecture outside the PIF system since 2009 (case of Fiji).<sup>6</sup> (Tarte & Fry, 2015: 7)

In order to highlight the joining moment of the processes analysed hereby, a definite unifying element between the actors of the Pacific transregionalism is comprised not only by a regional proximity, similarity of economic, social and security problems, but above all by **cultural proximity** in terms of recognition of **one common homeland culture**, and Polynesian culture. (Spoonley 2000, 12; Kennedy 2000, 2) Another important and significant developments from institutional point of view was in my opinion the rise of the three other groups, as The Pacific Small Island Developing States, Melanesian Spearhead Group, The Pacific Islands Development Forum, Parties to the Nauru Agreement reflecting the latest development in the region considering also the power rise of the external actors (as for example influence of China with the MSG).

**The Pacific Small Island Developing States** (hereinafter referred to as PSIDS) has also become the key diplomatic vehicle for Pacific participation in global southern coalitions such as the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the Group of 77 and UN. **Melanesian Spearhead Group** (hereinafter referred to as MSG) could be seen as a major forum for sub-regional integration, and for diplomacy on decolonization with a great role of Fiji and PNG played. All the Melanesian countries embraced the new and deeper integration proposed as part of the new MSG since 2009. Most prominent has been the achievement of significant free trade in goods and services, including the movement of skilled labour as an very important moment of promoting and developing education and training institutions region-wide.

A Fiji-led initiative **The Pacific Islands Development Forum** (hereinafter referred to as PIDF) established in 2013 developed out of the ‘Engaging with the Pacific’ meetings, which Fiji organised from 2010 as a means of building ties with its Pacific neighbours following suspension from the PIF. There could be 2 novel elements of the PIDF identified here:

1. the new institution emphasised inclusivity, a connection between leaders and society, which had been lacking in the PIF. It brought together civil society groups, the private sector, international agencies and governments in a process that stressed partnerships and network diplomacy.
2. its focus on ‘green growth’, which seemed to offer hope of overcoming the stalling of regional action in key areas such as climate change and sustainable development.

Finally, in 2009 **Parties to the Nauru Agreement** (hereinafter referred to as PNA) represented the island states with the region’s largest tuna stocks and served as a vehicle for gaining greater control over their shared resource and so-called tuna

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<sup>6</sup> As given by Heyes, the Fiji Post-coup Fiji has responded to its diplomatic isolation reflected in 2009 suspensions from PIF, by seeking an alternative route to Pacific regionalism. Fiji has done this through strengthening the non-Forum regional organisations (such as MSG and PSIDS), and the controversial founding of the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF). However, despite the lofty rhetoric most PICs remain aligned with the more traditional PIF. (Heyes. 2014.)

diplomacy has become a successful tools in implementing these new ideas in fisheries management with a markant results - in dramatic increases in revenue to the member countries. This development is independent of Fiji's suspension from the PIF, since Fiji is not a member of PNA, and therefore demonstrates a broader assertion of Pacific control over regionalism.

As confirmed above, Börzel's (2016) explanation may be used for conclusion when saying that the Pacific community processes may be classified as transregional as *"there are more spontaneous and endogenous processes which involve a variety of state, market and civil society actors organized in formal and informal networks are categorized as regionalization or "cross-border micro-level regionalism".* (Börzel 2016, 4)

## **CONCLUSION**

From the research question point of view, hereby, globalization in this process could be seen as a process providing tools for development and stabilization due to increasing availability of communications or transportation. These aspects should be, in my opinion, seen as the key to keeping the dynamic development of the analysed region and to the concept of trans -regionalism here at all. This makes it clear that the development of the region under maintaining its specificities is generally accepted as a common target crossing the boundaries of a single national state, and a new paradigm shift here is a logical consequence of understanding the spirit of community enhancing and enabling thus the mutual contributions to its development. The current development of the region in the context of building a transnational community is not just an expression of the contemporary globalization, but rather a continuation and development of a Polynesian heritage as the common Polynesian origin of the PICs makes it a region- wide accepted and respected instrument for developing and managing the region.

The multicultural characteristics of the region (however based on common Polynesian heritage) should be in my opinion seen as the most initiative impulse for building the new Pacific regionalism and as one of the reasons due to which is this form of trans-national cooperation widely considered as one of the most effective. Therefore, I see the Pacific transnationalism as gradually built and intensified networking across the national borders initiated by economical and social-cultural needs brought by globalisation challenges enhanced with the pro-regional feelings region-wide, i.e. community building based on loyalty built regionally (despite the homeland and the place of current residence also) (Spoonley 2000, 2).

As provided above, the Pacific Island states have created new truly Pacific-run institutions outside the PIF system in order to better negotiate trade and economic relationships with Australia and New Zealand, and Europe and this process could be called a paradigm shift as new set of ideas about how the Pacific should engage in global and regional diplomacy. (Tarte & Fry, 2015: 1) This term also reflects, in my opinion, also a shift from definitely and traditionally intergovernmental organisation (PIF) to mix-membership actors, as defined above.

The coherence and novelty of these ideas and their departure from prevailing ideas suggests a 'paradigm shift' reflected in various calls for the development of an effective Pacific voice; the claim that the Pacific needs to engage assertively in global diplomacy in relation to key challenges impacting the region while identifying the

key areas such as climate change, tuna diplomacy and oceans management. It is claimed that there should be effective representation of a genuine 'Pacific voice' in global forums and that Pacific Island states need to work together in joint diplomacy at the global level (tuna, climate diplomacies). The last but not least of the requirements for the future development is the growing recognition and acceptance of the role of sub-regional groupings and initiatives, in line with the view that a 'one-region' approach need not be the best approach.

The consistency and novelty of these ideas having left the previous ideas and practices (as by Australia through PIF) reflected in the various applications of an "effective Pacific voice". This process may be seen as a logical consequence of the developments reflecting the Leaders' claims for stronger and more visible Pacific strong engagement in global diplomacy (i.e. no being still under New Zealand's or Australian representation) hopefully being a more effective way for the PICs to react on the challenges affecting the region in the "life" areas as climate change, tuna diplomacy and ocean management bringing a more effective representation of the Pacific in global for a. The main preconditions for this is that Pacific Island countries must use the joining "advantage" - a cultural links to work together on global diplomacy (in tuna or climate diplomacy).

The last part of the paper titled New Pacific Regionalism and a Paradigm Shift was to answer the research question as identifying and analysing the key moments of this shift in regional architecture confirming the hypothesis that the Leaders underwent the changes in order to enhance the regional cooperation and communication focused on mutually driven development in a "Pacific way".

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