

Welcome to 2012 and the **first TPPWatch Action Bulletin** with brief updates on developments and activities relating to the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement from New Zealand and elsewhere. We hope to put one out every two weeks and include news from you and other activists about TPPA-related activities and resources. We want to keep the bulletins brief, so will add links for those who want more detail.

Concerned groups met in December to strategise on TPPA

The proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade and investment agreement poses a serious threat to many aspects of New Zealand's future, but very few kiwis are aware that it is being negotiated, let alone what it might mean. **In December 2011 representatives from more 20 groups from trade unions, environmentalists, churches, Maori, IT, authors, public health and development sectors met** at a workshop convened by TPPWatch, CAFCA, NZ Not for Sale and TPP Action Group to discuss concerns about the implications of the TPPA and strategies to promote debate about the agreement.

If you are in a group that is concerned about the TPPA but wasn't there please tell us or ask it to contact us so we can involve it in the campaign.

Key issues for NZ include ...

- ✘ Sovereignty and democracy
- ✘ Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- ✘ Resisting, restricting and reversing privatisations
- ✘ Health policies (medicines, buying blood, ACC, insurance, PPP hospitals)
- ✘ Limiting foreign investment and giving preferences to Kiwis
- ✘ Stricter regulation of mining, fisheries, tobacco and alcohol, aged care homes, construction ...
- ✘ Foreign Investors' right to sue the government in international tribunals
- ✘ Central and local government right to Buy NZ and local contracting
- ✘ Quarantine, GM and food labelling
- ✘ Financial stability and taxes on hot money flows
- ✘ Internet access & liability
- ✘ Public service ethos for education, health, transport, water
- ✘ Temporary entry of managers and skilled employees
- ✘ Government support for SOEs like Kiwibank
- ✘ Labour and environment rules

(Bill Rosenberg from NZCTU has a great powerpoint setting out the key issues for NZ, with examples – http://web.me.com/jane_kelsey/Jane/TPPA.html)

It is hard for people to connect to these kinds of issues so we need to develop resources that include lots of local examples. Can you help?

Do you know famous people who might put their names to the campaign?

March and June 2012 are crunch times for action

Negotiations began in March 2010 in Melbourne. There have been nine formal rounds, several informal “inter-sessional” meetings, and side meetings at APEC. The next formal round is 1-9 March 2012 in Melbourne and rounds will probably be two-monthly after that. **The next NZ round is likely to be in mid-2012.** During 2012 there will be more informal negotiations by teleconferences, sub-group meetings, etc in controversial areas that are lagging behind. No new formal deadline has been set (the original target was the APEC meeting in November 2011). However, the statement of ministers at APEC is being used to pressure negotiators to conclude a package by mid-2012 and tie up the process by the end of the year. As NZ’s Groser has conceded, the longer it takes the more chance it will fall over.

The March meeting in Melbourne is the target for ramping up public awareness and pressure on the government.

Mid-2012 is the target date for putting multiple spanners in the works.

The next NZ round around July 2012 may be make or break for the agreement.

Governments remain committed to obsessive secrecy

Leaks of draft texts and papers are the only real information we have about these negotiations. Despite national and international letters from organisations representing millions of people, the 9 governments have agreed that no draft texts or background documents will be released until four years after the negotiations are concluded or collapse. That means no governments can be held accountable while they are in office for the trade-offs they have made. Moves to hold more informal negotiations take away the already superficial opportunities for “stakeholder” interaction with the delegations. The National-led government blocked a petition for the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade committee to hear submissions on the likely implications of the agreement.

We need creative new ways to break down the secrecy!

This is as an international campaign

The TPPA involves nine governments (Australia, Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, US, Vietnam) with Japan, Canada and Mexico waiting outside the door until they are allowed in. We have allies in almost all those countries who share very similar concerns and have been working together to put pressure on their own governments and on the negotiators collectively when they meet.

Do you have international contacts you think would want to join the campaign?

Contact TPPWatch at: tppwatch@gmail.com (managed by Hannah Coleman)

You can find out more about the issues and the campaign by following these links:

www.tppwatch.org

www.nznotforsale.org

www.tppdigest.org

http://web.me.com/jane_kelsey/Jane/TPPA.html

www.scoop.co.nz

<http://union.org.nz/tppa>

Thanks! Mary-Ellen O’Connor and Jane Kelsey on behalf of TPPWatch