

**Victory for Democracy – TPPA negotiations agree to release text!**

The nine parties to the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement (TPPA) negotiations made a dramatic and unexpected u-turn, agreeing to lift the veil of secrecy on their draft texts and background documents.

Critics of the obsessive secrecy that surrounds the negotiations hailed the decision as a triumph for democracy. ...

The announcement comes as negotiations seemed to be retreating further into the trenches. We heard that all future rounds would be held in the US. That means the US, as host, controls the agenda. A raft of 'inter-sessional' talks will exclude any troublesome 'stakeholders'....

Hence, the surprise at today's announcement that the negotiators have embraced a new free trade doctrine known as the 'Dracula principle' – pull back the curtains and flood the draft text with the disinfectant of daylight, allowing the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, like Dracula, to wither and die.

**Sorry, April fool [press release](#) - although one media outlet asked if it was true!**

**Future rounds shift to US, pressure to close deal by July**

Contrary to what was in the last bulletin about a round in NZ in July, it is now clear that future rounds are now going to be held in the US. That means they will control the agenda, chair the meetings, draft any outcome statements and provide abundant new opportunities for corporate lobbyists to pressure other countries to agree to their demands. A senior US official said they **aim to close out the talks in July** – one round in Dallas in May, the trade ministers will meet during the APEC meeting in June to talk about political tradeoffs, and they will have another round on the West Coast of the US in July. This is no April Fool!

**Time is short to up-the-ante on opposing this deal or all the things we care about – public health, mining, privatisations, open access Internet, foreign control, let alone tino rangatiratanga, sovereignty and democracy – will be beyond our control.**

**Internet freedom: TPPA, ACTA and SOPA**

As the TPP heads for its **next intersessional meeting on IP provisions in Chile in April**, public concern about the agreement has been growing, often tied to the previous public outcry over SOPA/PIPA and ACTA. The enforcement provisions in the IP section of the TPP have been described as "ACTA-plus," but to what extent is the TPP an ACTA clone? And how far beyond ACTA does the TPP go? Infojustice has prepared an expert comparison of the copyright enforcement provisions in the TPP with those in ACTA, that has a [detailed analysis and a great highlights document](#).

**There was a great campaign against ACTA in NZ. Time for those Kiwi ACTAvists to fill the cyberspace with a public campaign against the TPPA.**

**World Conference on Tobacco or Health Calls for Tobacco out of all FTAs**

Last week a huge global meeting in Singapore discussed ways to end the tobacco epidemic and stop the tobacco industry's attacks on progressive tobacco control initiatives. The dispute brought by Philip Morris using investor enforcement powers against Australia's plain packaging law was a hot topic, as were the risks of similar harassment suits under the TPPA. The [WHO Secretary General](#) cautioned governments not to compromise their stand by allowing the Industry to influence the policy and legislative processes through what they call

‘ joint screening committees; ‘. In some countries, the tobacco industry is pushing for joint government-industry committees to vet or screen all policy and legislative matters pertaining to tobacco control. Don’t fall into this trap. Doing so is just like appointing a committee of foxes to look after your chickens.’ That is exactly what the transparency and regulatory coherence chapters of TPPA aim to do. The Conference Declaration called for “Public health protection clauses [to] be included in all new or re-negotiated trade and investment agreements and treaties. Tobacco to be explicitly excluded from such agreements and treaties.”

**Tobacco control groups are already working hard to protect the goal of a Smokefree Aotearoa by 2025 from the TPPA. Spread the word about the outrage of the Philip Morris case and what that means for NZ if a TPPA gets through.**

### Media & Blogs

**‘Australia’s line in the sand’**, *Sunday Star Times*, 1 April 2012: The US president is looking for a trade-deal trophy to mark the last year of his first term. But Australia is uneasy at the implications. Negotiations over a Pacificwide free-trade agreement could be destroyed by Australian sensitivity to the Obama administration’s insistence that United States companies be allowed to sue governments over policy changes that damage their investments. ...

**‘NZ giving away power in Pacific trade deal, MPs warned’**, *Sunday Star Times*, 1 April 2012: The Smokefree Coalition is asking whether foreign investors or public health will be protected under any trans-pacific Partnership (TPP) free trade zone. But the implications of InvestorState Dispute Settlement (ISDS) – which would allow foreign investors to sue if treaty partners introduce legislation or regulation that adversely affects their investments – potentially go well beyond health. They could limit the government’s ability to regulate mining, telecommunications and other industries. Other policies that could be targeted in the negotiations include tobacco control laws, stronger restrictions on foreign investments, the Pharmac scheme for buying and subsidising drugs and intellectual property protection...

### New resources

Bill Rosenberg and Jane Kelsey’s [updated slides](#) on implications of the TPPA for NZ presented at a meeting of the Fabian Society in Wellington on 29 March 2012.

### Upcoming activities

**Hikoi against privatisation of public assets, mining and land sales to foreign owners, and the TPPA leaves Te Rerenga Wairua on 23 April and arrives in Wellington on 5 May.**

**Protest Rally Auckland Saturday, 28 April 2012 - 3PM Britomart, Auckland.**

**[Join the hikoi when it reaches your part of Aotearoa, and make your opposition to the TPPA very visible. Next bulletin will have leaflets to hand out.](#)**

### More Taking People’s Power Away buttons now available

We have run off more of the great buttons **Aue! Taking People’s Power Away**. They cost around 70 cents each, so koha is appreciated.

### Please update us on news and local activities

Please share TPP activities or good articles: contact Mary Ellen [iconstance@gmail.com](mailto:iconstance@gmail.com) (the bulletin) and/or Hannah [tppwatch@gmail.com](mailto:tppwatch@gmail.com) (the website); Facebook page, [Stop Stealing New Zealand](#) and website [www.tppwatch.org](http://www.tppwatch.org)

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