



THE PAOLO BUDINICH SCIENCE DIPLOMACY LECTURE

## SCIENCE DIPLOMACY: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AS SEEN THROUGH A SMALL-COUNTRY LENS

**Sir Peter Gluckman**

Chief science adviser to the Prime Minister of New Zealand and  
head of the International Network for Science Advice to Governments

**Venue: ICTP Leonardo Building, Budinich Lecture Hall**  
**Thursday, 11 June 2015 • 10:30 hours**

Classically, science diplomacy has been viewed either from the perspective of diplomacy for science or science for/in diplomacy, though many actions have multiple effects. This codification has been primarily viewed as a tool of large countries projecting soft power or protecting their interests.

This talk will extend from such framing to consider science diplomacy from the perspective of a small advanced economy. I would argue that the issues that are raised also have relevance to developing countries, both large and small.

As the global architecture both in science and in economic and environmental affairs is changing, the challenge for a small nation is how to project its voice and protect its interests. Within the science policy space, there are examples where small but scientifically active countries were not consulted and yet the outcomes have impacted on them. As the global agenda for sustainability is operationalized much through

science at a global level, there is the danger that the interests and capabilities of small countries will be ignored and this has potential social and economic implications. Ameliorating this risk requires the disproportionate efforts of scientists and diplomats from small countries.

On the other hand, small advanced economies are now demonstrating that they can extend and exploit their interests well beyond the scope of traditional diplomatic links via science diplomacy, and that by projecting their identity as nimble, thinking and innovative countries they can protect and develop their interests even with large powers – and project soft influence (not power) more broadly.

These points will be illustrated with examples from New Zealand and other small advanced economies. The argument can be made that all Ministries of Foreign Affairs, irrespective of national size and developmental status, now need to integrate science into their toolkit.

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## THE SPEAKER

### **Sir Peter Gluckman**

Sir Peter Gluckman is the Chief Science Adviser to the Prime Minister of New Zealand and Special Science Envoy for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He chairs the International Network for Governmental Science Advice, a network bringing science advisers, academies, policymakers and scholars together to consider how the science-policy nexus can be enhanced at all levels of government from local to trans-national. He heads the secretariat to the Small Advanced Economies Initiative that brings such countries together to discuss areas of science, economic and foreign policy where country size is important. He chairs the Asia Pacific Economic Council Group of Science Advisors and Equivalents.



He has written extensively on the theory and practice of scientific advice to governments, on the relationship between knowledge and values and on the science-diplomacy nexus. He holds a Distinguished University Chair in perinatal and pediatric biology at the University of Auckland and is Visiting Professor in the Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy at University College London. He is a member of the advisory group to the STI directorate of the OECD.

His academic background is in pediatric and developmental biology, evolutionary biology and developmental pathways to disease. He has published over 700 scientific papers and reviews, books for both technical and lay audiences and has received the highest scientific and civilian awards in New Zealand and numerous international scientific awards. In 2014 he was appointed by the Director General of the World Health Organization as co-chair of the Commission to End Childhood Obesity.