

Border closure as pandemic response policy

Are islands anchored to UN guidelines or sailing away?

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Outline

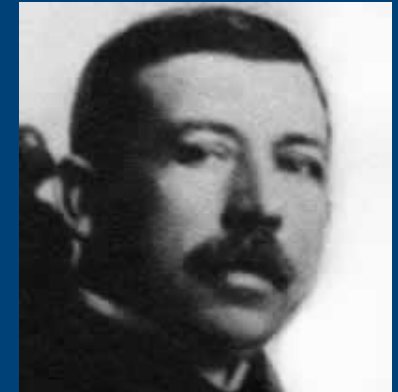
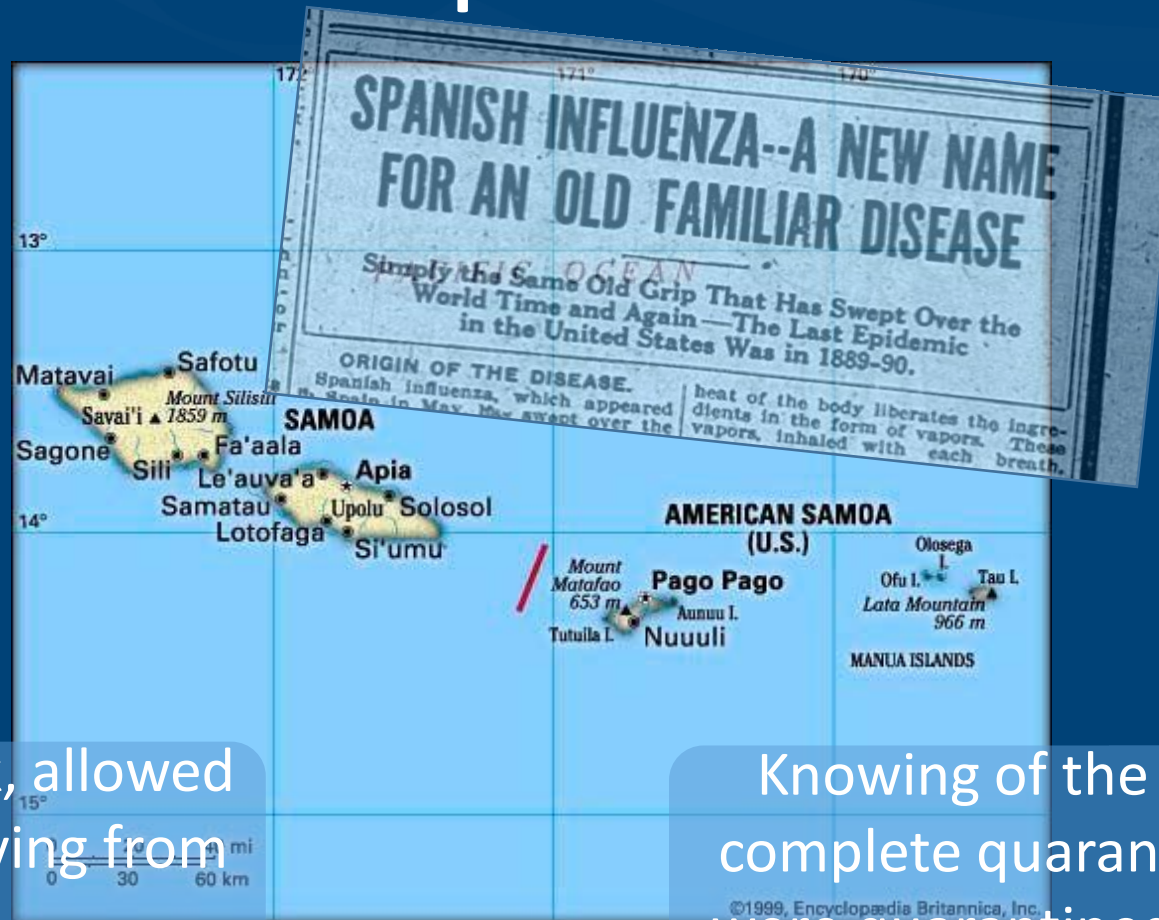
- Pandemics and small islands: Experiences
- UN (WHO) regulations on closure of sovereign borders
- Border closure in islands: Effectiveness
- A research project: What pandemic response are islands planning?

Pandemics and small islands: Experiences



Robert Logan
Administrator W.
Samoa (1914-1919)



Knowing of the outbreak, allowed
Samoan passengers arriving from
NZ to disembark (Field, 2015)



John Martin Poyer
Governor American
Samoa (1915-1919)

Knowing of the outbreak, ordered
complete quarantine; even mail bags
were quarantined for five days (McLane, 2013: 41)

Pandemics and small islands: Experiences

1918-1919 Flu Pandemic				
	New Zealand	Iceland	Western Samoa	American Samoa
Quarantine	No quarantine measures	Quarantine on roads and sea separating NE from SW regions	No quarantine 	Full quarantine 
Mortality	550/100,000 Deaths spreads across country	830/100,000 Deaths spread exclusively in SW	22,000/100,000 <i>Worst death rate in 1918 pandemic</i>	0/100,000

Pandemics and small islands: Experiences

Quarantine policies in islands were effective in 1918, but in 2018?



UN (WHO) regulations on closure of sovereign borders



International Health Regulations (IHR 2005):

“One of the objectives of the IHR (2005) is to minimize unnecessary restrictions to travel and trade ...”

IHR Emergency Committee on H1N1 pandemic (2009):

“Continue ... not to close borders and not to restrict international travel.”

UN (WHO) regulations on closure of sovereign borders

WHO Pandemic Risk Management 2017:

“While the IHR (2005) do not prevent States Parties from implementing specific ... travel related measures,

they do require States Parties to inform WHO of these measures and the justification for their introduction

WHO can request the implementing State Party to reconsider their application” (2017: 12)



Border closure in islands: Effectiveness

However, quarantine may *delay* the spread ...

“Quarantining entering travelers at international borders did not substantially delay virus introduction in past pandemics, *except in some island countries*” — WHO Writing Group, 2006: 81

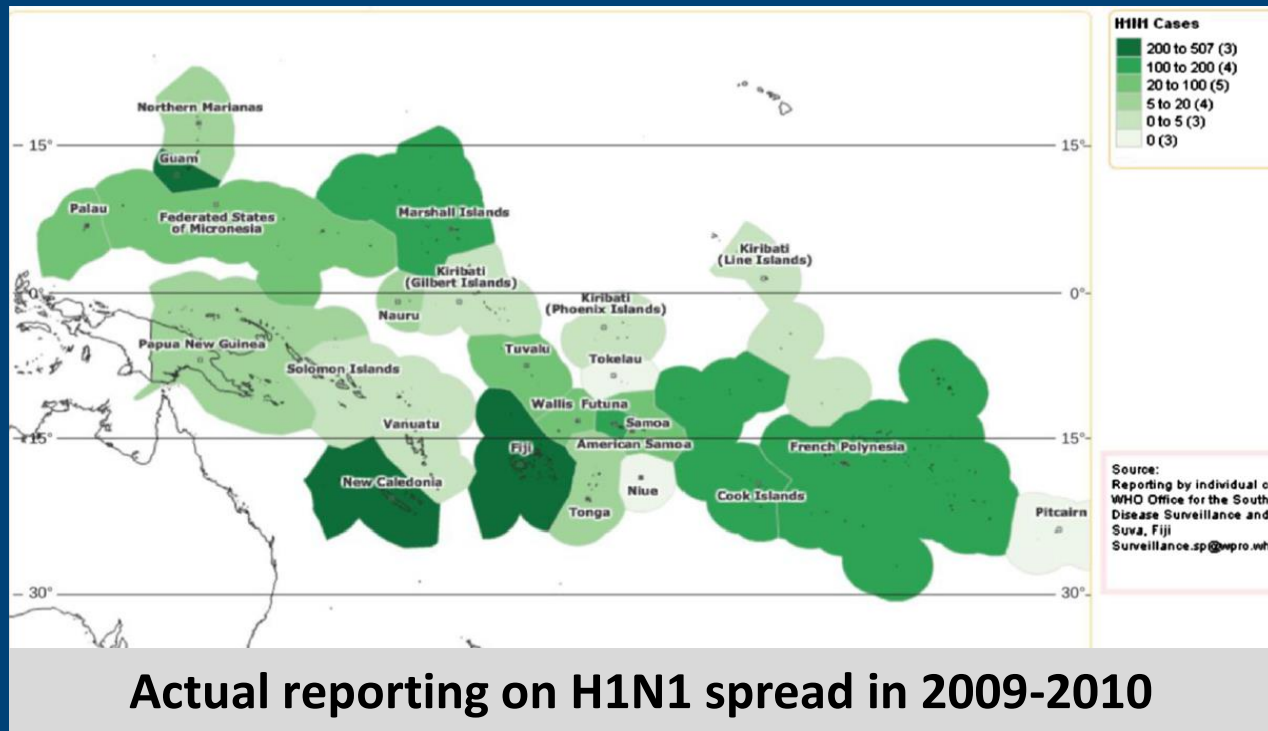


Delaying the spread of a pandemic matters:

buys time for vaccine development, preparedness, treatment

Border closure in islands: Effectiveness

Even with borders kept open, a low density of incoming travellers delays spread



Actual reporting on H1N1 spread in 2009-2010

Kool et al, 2013: 4

Table 1: Probability of small islands in the South Pacific escaping a global influenza pandemic (for different travel volume reductions for arriving travellers).

Country (year for traveler arrival data)	Total annual traveler arrivals	Island escape probability for		
		99% travel reduction $R_0 = 1.5$ $R_0 = 2.25$ $R_0 = 3.0$		
Guam (2007/08)	1,210,600†	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Fiji (2004)	596,084	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Northern Mariana Islands (2004)	589,244*	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
French Polynesia (2006)	221,549*	0.02	<0.01	<0.01
Samoa (2007)	196,627‡	0.03	<0.01	<0.01
Vanuatu (2006)	154,101§	0.06	<0.01	<0.01
Cook Islands (2007)	109,115	0.14	<0.01	<0.01
New Caledonia (2006)	100,491*	0.16	0.01	<0.01
Palau (2006)	86,375*	0.21	0.02	<0.01
American Samoa (2006)	72,800	0.27	0.04	0.01
Tonga (2003)	63,451¶	0.32	0.06	0.02
Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) (2005)	18,958*	0.71	0.43	0.32
Solomon Islands (2007)	13,748*	0.78	0.54	0.44
Marshall Islands (2005)	9173*	0.85	0.66	0.57
Kiribati (2006)	4704#	0.92	0.81	0.75
Niue (2006)	4588**	0.92	0.81	0.76
Tuvalu (2007)	1130	0.98	0.95	0.93
Nauru	n/a	-	-	-

Probability calculation of pandemic spread

Eichner et al, 2009: 160

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UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

Is border closure an realistic policy option for small islands?



“One challenge faced by Pacific Island Countries and Territories during the H1N1 pandemic was the difficulty in applying advice aimed at the global level to the unique local circumstances found in the Pacific.

Several authorities experienced frustration at being advised that countries should not institute border closure.” Kool et al, 2013: 6

Kool et al, 2013: 6

“Quarantine at the borders of island nations could contribute substantially to preventing the arrival of pandemic influenza or at least delaying the arrival date ... reduce by more than 99% the risk.” Nishiura et al, 2009: 11



A research project: What pandemic response are islands planning?

“Even in the face of a global pandemic, public health is still governed by the principle of national sovereignty; nation states retain ultimate authority in decision-making, and regional institutions can only offer guidance and support.” Coker, 2006: 887

However, not all small islands have full sovereignty in public policy-making; many islands are “Sub-National Island Jurisdictions (SNIJs)”

Baldacchino & Milne, 2009

The Case for Non-Sovereignty

Lessons from sub-national island jurisdictions

Edited by
Godfrey Baldacchino and
David Milne

A research project: What pandemic response are islands planning?

List of small sovereign island states		
Country		Population
1. Antigua & Barbuda		86,000
2. Bahamas		392,000
3. Barbados		285,000
4. Cabo Verde		540,000
5. Dominica		71,000
6. Fed. States Micronesia		106,000
7. Grenada		107,000
8. Iceland		316,000
9. Kiribati		98,000
10. Maldives		329,000
11. Malta		405,000
12. Marshall Islands		53,000
13. Nauru		14,000
14. Palau		18,000
15. St Kitts & Nevis		51,000
16. St Lucia		174,000
17. St Vincent & Grenadines		120,000
18. Samoa		179,000
19. São Tomé e Príncipe		163,000
20. Seychelles		94,000
21. Solomon Islands		523,000
22. Tonga		104,000
23. Tuvalu		13,000
24. Vanuatu		243,000

- Small < 500,000 people
- 24 sovereign island states
- 44 SNIJs

List of non-self-governing islands			
Territory	Metropole		Population
1. Christmas Island	Australia		2,000
2. Norfolk Island	Australia		2,000
3. Cocos Islands	Australia		1,000
4. Rapa Nui	Chile		6,000
5. Faroe Islands	Denmark		51,000
6. Greenland	Denmark		56,000
7. Aland	Finland		29,000
8. Reunión	France		865,000
9. Martinique	France		386,000
10. Guadeloupe	France		404,000
11. New Caledonia	France		269,000
12. French Polynesia	France		268,000
13. Mayotte	France		213,000
14. Saint Martin	France		78,000
15. Wallis/Futuna	France		16,000
16. St Barthélemy	France		9,000
17. St Pierre/Miquelon	France		6,000
18. Jersey	UK		95,000
19. Isla of Man	UK		86,000
20. Guernsey	UK		96,000
21. Bermuda	UK		62,000
22. Cayman Islands	UK		56,000
23. Turks Caicos Islands	UK		31,000
24. British Virgin Islands	UK		28,000

List of non-self-governing islands (cont'd)			
25. Anguilla	UK		16,000
26. St Helena, Asc/TdC	UK		8,000
27. Montserrat	UK		5,000
28. Falkland Islands	UK		3,000
29. Br. Indian Ocean Terr.	UK		3,000
30. Pitcairn	UK		50
31. Guam	USA		160,000
32. US Virgin Islands	USA		107,000
33. American Samoa	USA		55,000
34. Nth. Mariana Islands	USA		52,000
35. Svalbard	Norway		3,000
36. Curaçao	Netherlands		153,000
37. Aruba	Netherlands		103,000
38. Sint Maarten	Netherlands		34,000
39. Bonaire	Netherlands		17,000
40. Sint Eustatius	Netherlands		4,000
41. Saba	Netherlands		2,000
42. Cook Islands	New Zealand		15,000
43. Niue	New Zealand		1,000
44. Tokelau	New Zealand		1,000

A research project: What pandemic response are islands planning?

Hypothesis

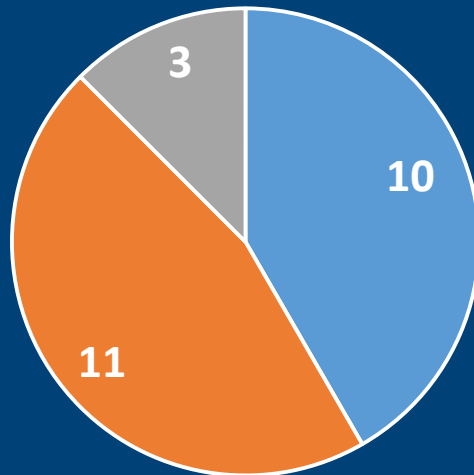
SNIJs will tend to follow their metropole's pandemic response policy, whereas sovereign small island states will tend to have pandemic policies that reflect their island's circumstances.

Method

Collecting pandemic response policies of the two groups of small islands and conduct a mixed content analysis in a compare and contrast fashion Hsieh & Shannon, 2005

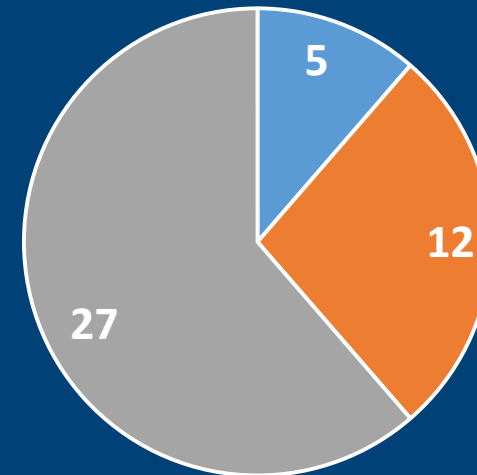
A research project: What pandemic response are islands planning?

Pandemic Response Policies in
Small Sovereign Islands (n=24)



- Confirmed pandemic policy
- Reference to pandemic policy
- Unknown

Pandemic Response Policies in
Non-Self-Governing Islands (n=44)



- Confirmed pandemic policy
- Reference to pandemic policy
- Unknown

A research project: What pandemic response are islands planning?

State of affairs

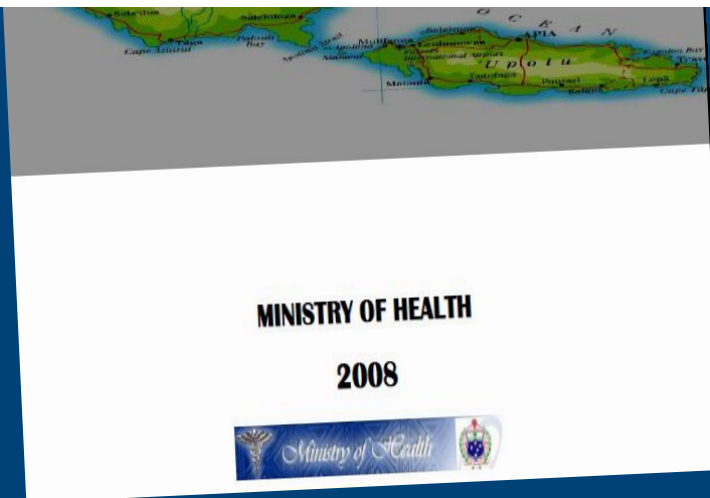
- We are still working on accessing 23 policy documents whose existence is suggested, but not actually seen. Following up via personal contacts.
- We are also working to positively confirm that those islands that have no mention of such a policy, really do not have one.
- We have begun text analysis.

Interested? We work on a shoestring and personal networks:
well-connected barefoot researchers are welcome!

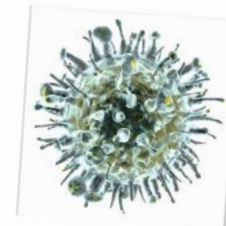
Examples of pandemic response policies considering border closure... or definitely not

Samoa National Avian and Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan

Another possible public health intervention is closing the border, and particularly stopping people arriving by planes or boats/yachts. There is a need to consider these carefully in terms of when to execute such decision, and how long to close it for. In relation to this, there is the question of whether Samoa is prepared to be self-sufficient and for how long will that be sustained. If such a



Channel Islands Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Strategy



International travel, border restrictions and screening

- 4.12 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office will issue advice regarding travel to affected countries. There are no plans to attempt to close borders in the event of an influenza pandemic. The UK expects to be one of the earlier

Version 2 dated 19th Nov 2013

Example of local histories being point of departure for contemporary pandemic response policy making

