

PIGS, POLITICS AND PETROLEUM:
DISRUPTIVE POLITICS AND DISJUNCTURES IN PAPUA
NEW GUINEA'S EXTRACTIVE SECTOR.

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INTRODUCTION

- The resources question
- PNG resources sector
- Melanesian politics
- A new resource politics?
 - Relational resources
- Conclusions

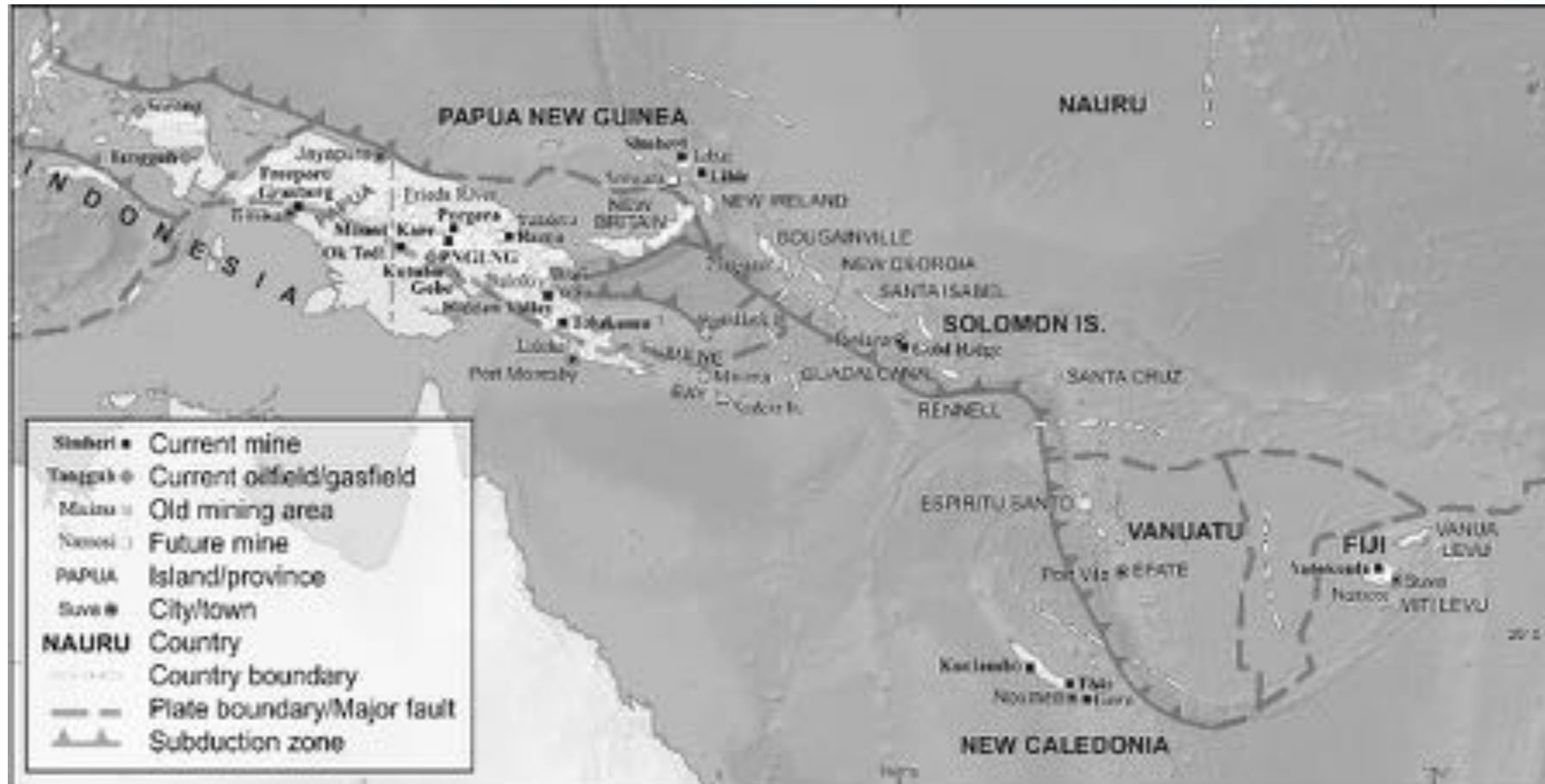


THE RESOURCES QUESTION



- Started with question of whether a resource endowment helped economic development
- Morphed into broader questions about impacts, resources, conflicts and institutions
- Now increasingly focussed on politics of resource extraction (post-extractive?!)





RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PNG'S RESOURCES SECTOR

1. PNG LNG – ExxonMobil-led

- US\$20billion project
- Massive uncertainties around local beneficiaries and flows
- Significant tax concessions, and complexity
- PNG government investment in project highly contested
- 'The gas project is not a magic bullet, what we need...'



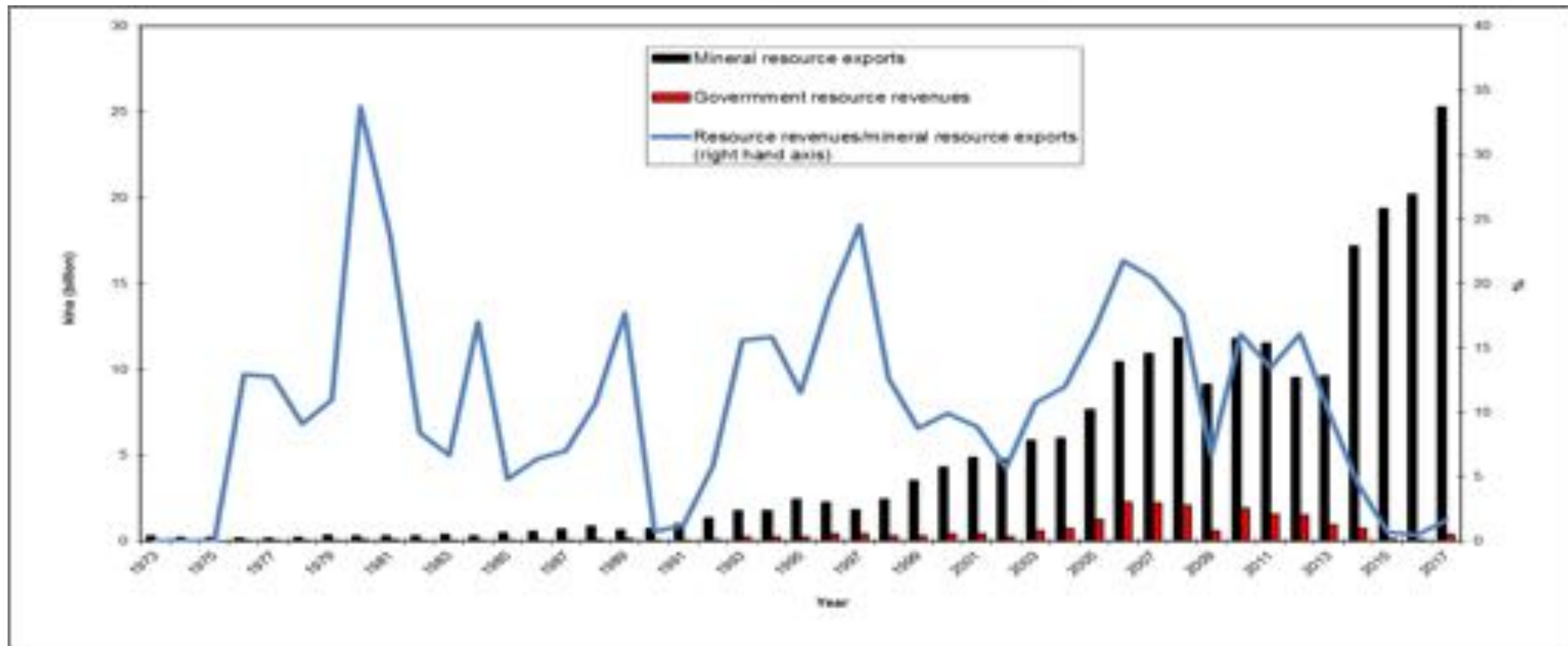
2. Earthquake, M7.5 26 February 2018, Hela province

- All major highland resource projects affected

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PNG'S RESOURCES SECTOR

- Reports of damage and loss revenues (from the PNG LNG and Porgera gold projects in particular) sparked debate again around returns from the extractives sector
- Occurred as the financial plight of PNG economy (and extractives role in it) started to become clearer
- Contribution of revenues from the sector also subject of EITI reports for 2015-2016
- Then landowners started destroying corporate property around the gas project operational area...

POLITICAL ECONOMY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S RESOURCE RENTS





THE REALITY OF MELANESIAN POLITICS



- Highly parochial
- Highly personalised
- Based strongly on relational (and post-human!) understandings of identity and personhood
- Calls for ‘objective forms of policy-making’ and politics miss the point
- Highly adaptive to outside agendas (accommodate rather than transformed)

RELATIONAL RESOURCES

- At local and national levels, moving beyond simple understanding of effects
- CCD, ‘The gift’ and the logic of Agreements
- Dependency – the ‘bogey of moralising social policy’ – ‘not the name of the problem; it is the name of the solution’ (Ferguson 2014:110).



‘DEPENDENCY’ AS MORAL AND ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE



- Dependency not the same moral frame in Melanesia
- ‘Rentier economy’ as viable, rational and sustainable
- Locally, similar rational economic decisions – ‘the walking ATM’
- ‘The company is our government now’

TOWARDS NEW FORMS OF RESOURCE POLITICS?



- Shift to local forms of mineral ownership?
- Tap into global concerns with land and local environments, but solutions must remain localised (co-constructed)
- Reality and materiality of development over rights?
- Corporate role: Rights and materiality?
- Work with, rather than ignore, local political leadership

CONCLUSIONS



- Broader lesson is one of *contingency*
- No one form of resource politics or governance can facilitate transformation of outcomes and agendas
- Resource extraction always produces environmental damage, inequality and social conflict...
- ...but attention to local politics and power, mitigate the worst excesses, disrupts... and can transform