Australia’s perception of Chinese technology as a threat: Securing Pacific Island Countries subsea cables

Geopolitics

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Intro

To what extent does Australian perception of Chinese technologies as a national and regional security threat influence the deployment of submarine cable networks in Pacific Island Countries?
Australia’s distrust in Chinese tech

- 2011/12: Huawei banned from the national broadband network (NBN)
- 2017: Australia fund the Coral Sea cable to avoid a Huawei Marine cable to connect Sydney
- 2018: Huawei and ZTE banned from the national 5G networks
Safeguarding PICs’ digital infrastructure to protect Australia’s security

- Extension of the *Belt and Road Initiative* (BRI) to Oceania in 2015

- Huawei Marine/HMN Tech showed interest to connect Australia and PICs

- PICs: the most important area for Australia’s security

- Creation of the *Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific* (AIFFP) in 2019
The Indo-Pacific alliances and the PICs

Trilateral Infrastructure Partnership for the Indo-Pacific (TIP): Australia, US & Japan => Fund:
- Palau Cable
- East Micronesia Cable

Quadrilateral security dialogue (Quad)
- Partnership for Cable Connectivity and Resilience (May 2023)
Australia: combining security and development aid for the Pacific

• Australian vision:
  “good” connectivity in PICs = development = (cyber)security in PICs and Australia

• A support to the digital goals of the 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy

• Tech competition: an opportunity for PICs’ governments and companies?

• A strategy that goes against the neutrality of PICs between China and the democratic and liberal bloc
New projects to come

- **Google**: a new player in the South Pacific

- **Australia**: a growing secondary cable route between America and Asia

- **Australia and US**: Funding of branching units to connect PICs
Thank you

Feel free to contact me!
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