The Challenges of Developing Knowledge and Local Groups in French Oversea Territories in the Pacific
What are the French Pacific Islands?

Some quick facts about them.
Clipperton Is.
Wallis and Futuna
Quick facts

History

- Remains of the former Second French colonial empire.
- Colonised during the 1800s to secure them away from other European powers.
- Instant French citizenship for Polynesians, after World War 2 on the other islands.
- Some independence movements in New Caledonia and French Polynesia.

Geography

- 3 types of islands: volcanic, coral, continental (Grande Terre, NC is part of Zealandia).
- A lot of coral reefs; 2nd biggest coral barrier in NC (UNESCO).
- Various kinds of administrative subdivisions.
- Climates ranging from equatorial to tropical (dry/humid) to temperate.
Quick facts

People

- Native people (Kanaks, Polynesians, Wallisian...).
- People from many immigration waves (European, Asian, Wallisian, Polynesian, etc.).
- Many different languages and cultures, some threatened.

Economy

- Mostly extractive: nickel in New Caledonia, perls in Polynesia, fishing, ...
- Budget transfers from European mainland and EU development funds.
- Tourism.
- Welfare structure copying part of mainland.
- Higher levels of unemployment
State of knowledge on Wikimedia projects

Some quick facts about it.

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Farino

**Farino (Udi Pwee en xaracôù)** est une commune française de Nouvelle-Calédonie située dans la Province sud, côté ouest, la plus petite du territoire, à environ 120 km au nord-ouest de Nouméa, à proximité de La Foa, Sarraméa, Moindou et Bourail.

La commune, bien que n'abritant aucune tribu, fait partie de l'aire coutumière Xaracuu.

**Géographie**

Le point culminant de la commune, le Pic Vincent, atteint une hauteur de 850 mètres. Elle est, avec la commune voisine de Sarraméa, la seule municipalité néo-calédonienne à ne pas avoir d'accès à la mer.

La commune enclavée est limitrophe uniquement de trois communes de la côté ouest : La Foa, Sarraméa, Moindou.

**Toponymie**

Cette section est vide, insuffisamment détaillée ou incomplète. Votre aide est la bienvenue ! Comment faire ?
Threats to knowledge in the Pacific islands

- Rare digitized sources, or difficult to find without a knowledge or the local context or the right academic publications.
- European-centric views. Some digitized resources are from colonial times and promotes dated views. Recent content is located in more specific portals, through paywalls, or paper only.
- Dated information or analyses. Same issue with digitized sources.
- Historical and current settlements sites mostly located near the sea, and are threatened by global climate change.
- Threatened native and creole cultures.
- Threatened endemic biodiversity.
Contribution issues

Distance

• Thousands of kilometers away from mainland, and sea between islands.
• More travel time (10+ hours flights with at least one connexion in Asia or Americas).
• Geographic accessibility.
• Some places accessible only by boats, money (thousands of euros for travel and accommodation)
• Logistics needed (PCs, smartphones to take pictures/sounds, internet access, libraries with local reliable sources to cite).
Contribution issues

Population density

- Lack of inhabitants on some islands (Administratives capitals VS the rest).
- Uninhabited islands: Clipperton, a lot of the Tuvalu archipelago islands. Access only through expeditions.
- Structures (e.g. GLAMs).
Contributions issues

Different kinds of databases

Semi-autonomous territories got their own, local databases, with more details than the national one:

- **Law**: legifrance, juridoc.gouv.nc, lexpol.cloud.pf
- **Statistics**: INSEE, ISEE (NC), ISPF
- **Local heritage**: depends on the how rich the local entities are: some got their own websites, while you need to parse the local bills and decrees for the rest
What initiatives?

Two types of initiatives:
- In European France
- On place

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In European France

Cheap and fast, but more limited range and impact.

- In-person (Paris; Délégation de la Polynésie Française, Maison de la Nouvelle-Calédonie).
- Remote training and workshops.
- Improving wikiprojects page presentation and listing useful resources there.
Maison de la Nouvelle-Calédonie (House of New Caledonia), Paris, in 2022

Pictures by J. N. Squire, CC-BY-SA, 2022
On place

Wide range and impact, but slower and costlier.

- Partnering with big locals organizations (Universities, Académie des Langues Kanaks, etc.)
- Partnering with structures in Europe too (eg Maison de la Nouvelle-Calédonie, Paris)
- In-person training/workshops with as much GLAMs as possible on Wikipedia, Commons, Wiktionary, Lingua Libre,...
- Wikimedia advocacy to local actors
- Developing local Wikimedian user groups for better autonomy
Thank you for watching!

Questions? Ideas?