
PACIFIC ISLANDS WAIT FOR TRUMP, WARY OF CLIMATE AND CHINA STANCE

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Kirsty Needham

Pacific island nations at the centre of a strategic rivalry between the U.S. and China that brought infrastructure and funding hope President-elect Donald Trump stays engaged in the region but are wary of competition spilling into confrontation, diplomats say.

A 2023 defence deal giving the U.S. military access to ports and airfields across Papua New Guinea came with a pledge of \$3.5 billion in infrastructure, equipment and training, according to PNG Foreign Minister Justin Tkatchenko, publicly disclosing an investment figure for the U.S. defence deal for the first time.

Papua New Guinea will continue to trade with China, even as U.S. military ties increase, he also told a resources conference in Sydney this week, highlighting a key worry among Pacific leaders about Trump's tougher approach towards Beijing.

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