New Regionalisms & Prospects for Sustainable Island & Ocean Governance in the South Pacific at the Start of the New Millennium

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'For many Commonwealth countries, climate change is the most serious threat to their future. Indeed, the very survival of some Commonwealth countries is at stake, with scientific forecasts indicating that some low-lying areas, including whole islands, will be inundated by rising sea levels.' (Hamilton 2003: 517)

'Earth's island paradises are under threat. The viability of their cultures, land & waters is being eroded by the impact of the globalizing economy & dramatically changing weather patterns...Small islands are facing big issues. Meeting these challenges has become a matter of survival for some islands...But while small islands have been gaining global attention & international support, the results to date have not kept pace with the problems.' (BPoA+10 @ www.sidsnet.org)

'The notion of island governance is heuristic...for comparative studies of governance which fail to recognize the particular character of governance in islands as opposed to that in other communities/economies/ecologies/societies. Moreover, somewhat curiously, ocean governance has been more popularized than that of islands; hence the corrective involved...for several disciplines & debates.' (Island Governance in the New Millennium, 1999)

""We are the only major international organization that specifically champions the cause of small states"...Some 32 of the Commonwealth’s members (presently, post-Zimbabwe, 53) are categorized as small states because their populations are less than 1.5 million & they are characterized by their vulnerability in the areas of defence, environmental disaster, limited human resources & environmental resources.’ (Commonwealth News Release, 2004)

""Islands"' & "migration": two notions rarely juxtaposed but which are invariably closely-related’ (Connell & King, 1999: 1)

The burgeoning 'new regionalism/s' literature (Soderbaum & Shaw 2003) has been innovative in its contributions to our understanding of how less familiar, more informal forms of regionalisms impact more familiar, formal institutions...but it has yet to take on board interrelated analyses of island & ocean governance. Similarly, it rarely addresses the issue of 'small' states directly, although logically, the smaller the state, the more likely it is to be connected into regional arrangements whether formal or informal, explicit or implicit. Both the UN 'system' (Alley 1998, Carlsson & Ramphal 1995) & Commonwealth 'extended family' (Shaw 2005 a & b) address small &/or island states but, as indicated in the final opening citation, such members constitute a larger proportion of the membership of the latter than the former. This paper seeks to juxtapose several trends & literatures relevant to contemporary discourses & policies (cf opening citation from Connell & King) around these two interrelated forms of governance - ie island & oceans - with reference to the South Pacific, although its purpose is primarily conceptual rather than empirical (see final section below); from globalizations to anti-globalizations & from international
relations to development studies, respectively. I also recognize that such analysis sits on the border of the academic & policy 'worlds', which I see as increasingly interrelated, especially as a growing proportion of creative 'social science' is produced by 'think tanks' & international institutions rather than traditional 'universities', even the latter's numerous research centers, including those in the South Pacific treated below (Heyzer 1995 & Mbabazi, MacLean & Shaw 2004).

Symptomatic of such 'solitudes' is the useful yet limited collections by Jayasuriya (2003 & 2004) on 'new regionalism' in Asia-Pacific. These are useful as they contrast 'open' with 'regulatory' regionalisms & both such regionalisms with emerging bilateralism in the contemporary Asia Pacific. But they are limited in terms of both geography – they treat only major mainland countries like China & Japan along with Southeast Asia, not the myriad other islands of the mega-region – and theory – they fail to relate to the burgeoning new regionalism/s literature from Bjorn Hettne's (1999) late-1990s UNU/WIDER project etc. (Soderbaum & Shaw 2003). So their useful triangular framework, with a focus on the state-market 'dialectic', is limited by its relatively narrow empirical scope: inter alia, the islands of the South Pacific should be brought back into consideration! Similarly, the deconstruction of the increasingly problematic ASEAN 'security community' by Nicholas Khoo (2004) reveals the decline if not demise of erstwhile 'Asian values' while the trio of titles from Dewitt & Hernandez (2003) is suggestive of ASEAN moving beyond state-centrism to a more comprehensive, human security framework which includes communities, ecology etc.

Likewise, this experimental new regional foray can be contrasted with parallel approaches in other regional oceans or rims, such as the North & South Atlantic Rims, Indian Ocean or Caribbean. In relation to the Indian Ocean, its Rim - Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) (www.dfat.gov.au/trade/iorarc & www.miti.gov.my/ior-background) - brings together 19 states, a dozen of which are in the Commonwealth (Field 2004: 102). And during the Cold War there was a proposal for an Indian Ocean Zone of Peace (Field 2004: 99-100). There is also the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) of five island states in the Southwest ocean (two of which are in the Commonwealth) (www.coi.intnet.mu & www.freeport-mauritius.com/coi) which has been in existence for two decades & was reviewed by ECDPM in Maastricht in 1998 in terms of its next decade (www.oneworld.org/ecdpm/pubs/coi). And regional relations in the Caribbean are both island-centric (CARICOM) & basin-wide (Association of Caribbean States) (Payne & Sutton 2001). Both are profoundly affected by the looming presence of the US as indicated by CBI & FTAA along with bilateral FTAs. And the region was more shaken by 9/11 & the subsequent 'war on terrorism' than more distant regions (Griffith 2004), having been negatively affected by the earlier 'war on drugs' (Griffith 2000).

I am also concerned here to relate such genres of analysis & practice to today's 53-country Commonwealths - both inter- & non-state - as they are distinguished by having a higher proportion of island (27) as well as small (32) (landlocked & coastal as well as island) members than other global organizations such as the UN system: 'the Commonwealth Secretariat has a comparative advantage in dealing with a wide range of small states' issues' (www.thecommonwealth.org & www.commonwealthsmallstates.org) (Shaw 2003 a, b & c & 2005 a & b) as well as with those of democracy & development. Thus its Expert Group report (chaired by
India's new PM, Manmohan Singh) released at the December 2003 Summit in Abuja — Making Democracy Work for Pro-poor Development (Commonwealth 2003a: ix) — highlights its comparative advantage as:

‘a unique microcosm of global social & ethnic diversity, and of North & South. Commonwealth countries & institutions are in a strong position to help deepen democracy & support development in member states.’

The multiple networks in the South Pacific embrace a wide & changeable variety of issues & members: there is no simple definition of region or network because, as in the EU, their numbers/definitions vary between more cultural, ecological & economic, infrastructural, political & strategic focii. Some South Pacific & small island state networks include Australia, New Zealand & other OECD states as members; others do not. The islands are marginal players in macro-regional arrangements like Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC); central actors in the meso-level Pacific Islands Forum; & sole players in micro-level institutions like the University of the South Pacific. There are interesting & shifting divisions of labor amongst & within these levels, as recently confirmed by the Jayasuriya (2003 & 2004) collections, reflecting the scale & status of different networks: asymmetric regionalisms.

Varieties of Regional Governance Involving Small Island States

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are concentrated in the Caribbean & South Pacific, but the 'extended family' of the Commonwealths also includes island communities in the Indian Ocean & Mediterranean Sea (www.commonwealthsmallstates.org). Indeed, the original imperial mother country - the United Kingdom - itself consists of some very distinctive island territories such as the Channel Islands, Isle of Man, Shetlands etc! As Clive Hamilton (2003: 517) notes:

'Remarkably, 27 Commonwealth countries (half the total) are members of the Alliance of Small Islands States (AOSIS), the grouping of countries that has pressed for the strongest measures to combat climate change'.

The SIDS Network (www.sidsnet.org) is itself a coalition of 'mixed actor' (ie not exclusively state) elements in the UN system like the UN Division for Sustainable Development & UNDP, AOSIS, bilateral donors like Japan & multilaterals like la francophonie, along with think tanks like the University of Malta, USP & UWI ('Conclusions of the International Workshop on Economic Vulnerability & Resilience of Small States', 2004: para 13). Likewise, the somewhat broader, small states (ie non-islands even landlocked as well as islands) network of countries with less than 5 million population (some 35 now out of 53) seeks to advocate members’ common interests in disaster prevention/relief, DFI, sustainable development etc (cf Green 2004: 455-459).

Global groupings of small islands & small states sometimes get conflated & they do share common as well as different interests. The larger grouping of all 32 small states (ie island or not!) includes in addition to the islands, small economies/communities in Southern Africa (BLSN) & the Gambia along with Belize & Guyana, with many of these having 'island' type qualities of geographic isolation & ecological vulnerability
(www.commonwealthsmallstates.org). The Commonwealth seeks to assist the 32 through its Ministerial Group on Small States (MGSS), now a decade old, Commonwealth Consultative Group on Small States (CGSS) of senior officials & a Task Force in ComSec which services this pair, increasingly in partnership with the IBRD (Commonwealth 2003). In January 2004, the Commonwealth with the UN International Trade Centre sponsored a conference in Trinidad on export strategy (Commonwealth News Release, 2004)

Elsewhere, I have characterized the distinctive patterns of inter- & non-state relations among the 54 (or 53 post-Mugabe's Zimbabwe) as 'Commonwealth governance'; ie the distinctive patterns of agenda-setting or issue-processing & policy-making within the Commonwealths' 'extended family' (Shaw 2003 a, b & c). In turn, island or ocean governance consist of continuous relations, however uneven or fraught, among state & non-state (especially corporate & civil society) (Carlsson & Ramphal 1995, Heyzer 1995) actors in island or ocean contexts; ie the distinctive 'triangle' of state, private & NGO actors (Commonwealth Foundation, 1999: 16, Shaw 2003 a & b & 2005) even if regional civil society in the South Pacific is problematic for a variety or reasons (cf Pacific Islands' Association of NGOs (PIANGO) (www.piango.org). The recent Manmohan Singh Commonwealth Expert Group adopts such a formulation of 'governance' as ‘partnership’, with the addition of one further actor type, ‘the international community’ (so proceeding from triangular or trilateral to quadrilaterial forms?):

‘...the state, the market, civil society & the international community each has a vital role to play in delivering development & democracy.’ (Commonwealth 2003a: ix)

Ocean governance may be more familiar than that for islands given the protracted Law of the Sea (LoS) deliberations & debates in the 1970s onwards: formal UN rules for international law & several regional inter-governmental agencies, but also increasing awareness of the vulnerability of the world's oceans/commons given economic pressures such as international (over-?) fishing, oil & gas industries, cruise-boats, growing levels of piracy especially around Asia even before 9/11 (Langewiesche 2004), urban waste etc as exposed by, say, Greenpeace, WWF etc. (‘Towards Effective Ocean Governance’, 1998)

But island governance is very distinctive & telling as islands are of necessity rather intimate communities, yet they relate in different ways to the global polity/political economy whether they are located in one formal archipelagic jurisdiction or not (eg Indonesia & the Philippines). Thus in the former, Bali or Irian Jaya have very different patterns of governance from the hegemonic island of Java; and in the latter in terms of political economy, Cebu is industrial whereas Guimaras produces mangoes (& migrants!). And such places change over time as technologies of communication, consumption, extraction (Smith 2004), production etc change given globalizations (Shaw 2004b): from sail to steam ships & onto container & cruise boats etc.

In turn, given distinctive mixes of triangular governance among civil societies, companies & states, we may begin to conceive of a typology of island governance: from more open to more closed, more/less integrated at local/national/regional/global (today also informal & illegal sectors!) levels; more dynamic to more static, even
regressive; more or less democratic; more or less vulnerable or resilient (’Conclusions’ 2004) more or less concerned to maximize human development/security; more or less authoritarian/anarchic; more versus less balanced partnerships among the trio of actor types etc… and, of course, islands, whether conceived as regimes, economies &/or communities, move between such forms especially in periods of intense local to global change, as in the post-bipolar South Pacific.

‘Human Security’ & Island/Ocean Governance

In developing notions of island/ocean governance as forms of new regionalisms, I will focus in particular on contributions from fields such as development studies, ecology, global governance, globalizations, human development/security, informal & illegal sectors, IPE & security studies (cf final section below) noting, as does Martin Shaw (2003), that there are profound, possibly insuperable, limits to the contemporary relevance of supposedly global disciplines like traditional 'international relations.' (see more on p 14 below) I will also be inclusive of analyses & ideas which originate outside ‘formal’ or recognized research sector auspices; ie the role of development networks, think tanks etc (again, more below at p 14). And I will attempt to transcend the apparent preoccupation with formal institutions & relations in established social sciences like economics & political science. (Shaw 2004b)

The focus of this paper happens to be rather timely given an upcoming pair of inter- & non-state events around both island & ocean governance in the second half of 2004: August's 10-year review of the Barbados Program of Action for SIDS in one of the Commonwealth’s more successful island states, Mauritius (www.sidsnet.org) (but now postponed until the start of the new year?), & November's conference of ISISA in Taiwan on 'Changing Islands - Changing Worlds' (the eighth in a series since 1986 which have all been held in the Commonwealth to date except that in Japan in 1994) (www.isisa2004.com.tw). The former will review progress (if any) towards the 1994 Barbados goals for SIDS (the range of topics is expected to include trade, tourism, freshwater, climate change, energy, transport & communications leading to a range of partnerships) while the latter will examine contemporary interdisciplinary analyses & explanations for SIDS development, or lack thereof.

Likewise, the broader Global Islands Network (www.globalislands.net) (ie including larger &/or more developed islands including archipelagoes) seeks to maximize information & awareness about island development/governance. It also includes islands which are not formally independent & are nominally parts of non-island countries. And it too is cosponsored by a range of heterogeneous organizations such as a range of antipodean universities, EU & other regional development agencies etc.

Island & ocean governance were most recognized & responsive in the heady days of the Law of the Sea debates in the 1970s leading to the UN Law of the Sea Convention in 1982 which has only been in force for less than a decade, since late-1994. Whilst the Convention constitutes a comprehensive form of international law it has hardly been authoritative, in part as a considerable proportion of its enforcement is, at least in theory, a function of such small (impoverished & weak) island regimes. Moreover, it has not often advanced human development & security. Furthermore, it has not contributed overly to the formulation or implementation of either global or regional 'security communities' (Adler & Barnett 1998).
Human Security/Development Versus Vulnerability: South Pacific & other regions

Island & ocean governance can generate a variety of outcomes, both less & more desirable. But here I focus on their contributions to human security/development, using the established, interrelated, commonsense notions articulated by the UNDP (1994: 23) in the early-1990s: 'Human security... means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease & repression. And second, it means protection from sudden & hurtful disruptions in the pattern of daily life.' Human security can be divided into economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community & political securities (UNDP 1994: 24-33), with the emphasis & ranking amongst these being a function of time, place & perspective; ie an analyst/actor concerned with ecology would prioritize ecological whereas an advocate of political economy would privilege the economic. The UNDP (1994: 23) perspective relates human development to human security: 'Human development is a broader concept...a process of widening the range of people's choices. Human security means that people can exercise these choices safely & freely....'

Interestingly, the generic UNDP formulation rarely mentions islands & oceans, even though it can be readily adapted to such concerns (www.undp.org/hdro). However, it has proceeded to prepare a trio of regional reports which focus on islands, along with myriad other such reports on, say, Eastern Europe, South Asia, Southern Africa etc. The most recent is on the OECS (UNDP 2002); the other two are on the Pacific: General Human Development Report (1994) & Human Development Report for the Pacific: creating opportunities (1999).

Human security let alone human development on many of the islands in the South Pacific, Commonwealth & otherwise, are threatened by a mix of economic & ecological factors; ie 'globalizations' & 'global warming'. Which of these one prioritizes is likewise a function of conceptual approach & empirical data. Both relate to the small islands' networks' privileging of vulnerability & resilience ('Conclusions' 2004)

Thus, Robert O'Brien & Marc Williams (2004: 281) relate such distinctive island concerns to broader discourses over 'developmental states' etc. They note that the World Bank's 1991 (ie pre-Asian crisis!) report on 'Pacific Island Economies: towards higher growth in the 1990s' pointed to the 'Pacific Paradox' of low levels of growth despite high levels of both ODA & DFI & proximity to the Asia Pacific:

'While the World Bank...attributed the "Pacific Paradox" to the dominant role of the public sector, an inability to adopt needed structural reforms, a general lack of competition, and weak financial sectors, critics of this view point to institutional & cultural constraints, political instability, the difficulties of nation-building, and lack of infrastructure & clear property rights.'

According to Clive Hamilton, the influential (if not epistemic?) UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) cautions that small islands are
"at particular risk of severe social & economic effects"...The very existence of several small island states in the Commonwealth is threatened by sea-level rise. ...In the Pacific, the following Commonwealth countries are the most vulnerable:

Tuvalu & Kiribati are predicted to suffer the greatest impact, including disappearance in a worst-case scenario;

Nauru & Tonga will be subjected to severe impacts, resulting in major population displacement;

Fiji & the Solomon Islands will be susceptible to moderate impacts;

Vanuatu & Samoa are predicted to experience "local severe to catastrophic" effects (IPCC 1997).

In the Indian Ocean, the Maldives are likely to suffer a profound impact, possibly complete submersion, with the highest point in the entire nation only 2.4 metres above sea level.' (Hamilton 2003: 521-522)

In general, such a ranking – another distinctive & unenviable form of new regionalism: that of the most vulnerable? - reflects that based on an index at Melbourne University which lists the most vulnerable atolls in the world as being in the Commonwealth: the Maldives, Tuvalu, Kiribati & Tokelau. (Hamilton 2003: 528)

Chapter 9 in the IPCC 1997 report on The Regional Impacts of Climate Change detailed likely impacts for vulnerable islands in the Pacific as elsewhere. Given 'strong dependence on economic sectors that are highly sensitive to climate change effects (eg coastal tourism & agriculture), small island states clearly are a vulnerable group of countries.' (www.grida.no/climate/ipcc/regional)

According to the 1993 'vulnerability index' of Briguglio, in inter-regional terms, small island states are much more vulnerable in terms of a trio of criteria: 'export dependence, insularity & remoteness, & proneness to natural disasters.' (www.grida.no/climate/ipcc/regional) (see also 'Conclusions' 2004)

Similarly, Pernetta (1988) has ranked Pacific islands in terms of intra-regional vulnerability to sea-level rise & concluded that:

'states such as the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu & Kiribati would suffer "profound" impacts, including disappearance in the worst-case scenario; "severe impacts", resulting in major population displacement, would be experienced by the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru & Tonga; "moderate to severe impacts" would be felt by Fiji & the Solomon Islands; & "local severe to catastrophic" effects would be experienced by Vanuatu & Western Samoa. ' (www.grida.no/climate/ipcc/regional)

International 'Intervention' & 'Responsibility' in Island Affairs

Given such ominous projections for this region of the ‘vulnerable Pacific’ (?), clearly, the discourses around 'humanitarian intervention' & now 'the responsibility to protect' (ICISS 2001) need to be extended offshore to cases of unacceptable or impossible
island & ocean governance or where vulnerability is high & resilience low; ie where protection is required from regime or ecological threats. I have treated the latter above; here I turn to the former.

The challenges to sustainable/democratic island governance have multiplied in the post-bipolar era with the apparent proliferation of 'failing states' in an 'arc of instability' - another definition of new regionalisms!?! - leading Australia to advocate in its immediate region 'coalitions of the willing' rather than UN multilateral responses. Painful independence in East Timor; rebellion in Bougainville, PNG; coup etc in Fiji leading to its temporary suspension from the Commonwealth; gang law in the Solomons, Australia's attempt to 'export' asylum seekers to Nauru etc: a sustainable & not uncontroversial 'Pacific solution' or 'Pacific strategy' (Kneebone & Pickering 2004)? This is despite the fact that 'governance' among state & non-state actors is more direct/familiar/intimate on islands by force of geography/ecology.

The Australian-led 'humanitarian intervention' in the Solomons in mid-2003 (McDougall 2004, Wainwright 2003) (Pacific Solution/Strategy? (Kneebone & Pickering 2004)) could be categorized as a classic 'responsibility to protect' exercise sanctioned by the South Pacific Forum (www.forumsec.org) (11 out of 16 in the Commonwealth) & involving other regional militaries (Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea & Tonga): a Cooperative Intervention Force which will need considerable staying power if nation-building is to follow from peace-making. The two-stage involvement, according to the authoritative Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) (2003), was to be the short-term restoration of law & order followed by longer-term capacity-building (www.aspi.org.au, www.amnesty.org).

To be sure, the North, especially the US does intervene in 'structural' terms on a continuing basis, from unilateral rules about net sizes for tuna fishing for its imports to routine inspections for money-laundering. The latter have intensified since 9/11 & island states, especially in the Caribbean & Pacific, are especially vulnerable to succumbing to such niche roles & then confronting related 'imperial' pressures.

Under US & other pressure, OECD (www.oecd.org) & Commonwealth have had task forces working on the fraught off-shore/money-laundering issue & the ACP has been active in the parallel areas of small arms & drug-trafficking. The OECD's Financial Action Task Force on Money-Laundering (www.fatf-gafi.org) has become increasingly active post-9/11, listing Non-Cooperative Countries & Territories (NCCTs). The latter presently include Nauru & the Cook Islands, but these are small potatoes compared to others named such as Egypt, Indonesia, Nigeria, Philippines & the Ukraine. There is an Asia-Pacific Group on Money-Laundering (APG) with headquarters in Sydney which is a branch of FATF. It encourages compatible self-assessments & mutual evaluations in the region.

The complexities of so-called 'money-laundering' becomes apparent when juxtaposed with another crucial dimension of Pacific Island survival: transfers from the diasporas, mainly in Australasia but also further afield. The role of Western Union (www.westerunion.com) in such a huge flow of hard currency in this as myriad other cases is under-appreciated/-researched, yet it is another dimension of 'globalizations': 200 000 franchised branches worldwide with an annual turnover of some $2 billion.
The retreat of the Bush II administration towards unilateralism stimulates a counter-response: more creative & energetic multilateralisms.

New Multilateralisms? New public diplomacy?

Novel forms of multilateralisms are emerging in response to the US preference for unilateralism which involves new 'coalitions of the willing' that reach outside of state actors alone toward non-state organizations & coalitions. These have been most apparent around the Montreal, Ottawa & Kimberley Processes on ozone depletion, landmines & blood diamonds, respectively (McRae & Hubert 2001). Small island states, even more than the LoS, need such supportive networks: innovative networking including 'public diplomacy' over ecological threats etc (cf Field (2004: 100 & 102) re Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) & South Pacific Forum).

First, notwithstanding the imperative of multilateralisms both between states & between them & non-state actors (Alley 1998), the very variety of conflicts & interests complicate cooperation, especially when non-state organizations are also involved. Oceans management & related maritime confidence- & security-building efforts can augment those on land & space especially for small island states, but such ‘tracks two & three’ diplomacy are problematic when traditional inter-state relations – ie ‘track one’ – are complicated as in the new century. This is so in today’s Asia as well as Africa: the elusiveness as well as desirability of human development/security. (Shaw 2004c) Meanwhile, the current US administration's march towards unilateralism continues, facilitated by platforms which include the world's only global navy with multiple nuclear aircraft carriers etc.

And second, Clive Hamilton (2003) relates divergent policies on the Kyoto Protocol to the imperative yet ineffectiveness of Commonwealth 'principles' as agreed at a series of CHOGMs at the end of the 20th & start of the 21st centuries. These have been seen to be largely concerned with notions of good governance - regimes which are non-democratic or military based such as Fiji, Nigeria, Pakistan & Zimbabwe of late are suspended from 'official' (ie inter-state) Commonwealth councils & deliberations - but he extends their remit to include the environment. He is particularly critical of Australia's determination to abandon Kyoto along with the Americans because of the effect this would have on the likelihood of more rapid climate change in the South Pacific. He laments that:

'Sea-level rise, and other dangers from climate-change, pose a severe threat to the future well-being and, indeed, the existence of some Commonwealth countries, yet some members of the Commonwealth appear to give no weight to the interests of developing country members.' (Hamilton 2003: 529)

I turn next to a set of innovative regional governance arrangements which may have received attention from analysts of island & ocean governance but not at all from students of new regionalisms.

Small States/Big Oceans

Although, we optimistically claimed at the turn of the century that 'The LoS Convention now provides the most extensive & comprehensive basis for international
law in any field' (Herbert & Shaw 2000: 210), we may have been premature in our positive sentiments. LoS remains rather problematic as such 'international law' is rarely authoritative, especially given minimal resources, especially among small, weak island regimes, for surveillance, interdiction etc, even in nominal 200 nautical mile EEZs. So 'piracy' etc is rampant, especially in areas characterized by conflicts on shore like the Horn of Africa or parts of West Africa, even if it sometimes (often?) perpetrated by the non-uniformed officers from the navies of each area? Such a retreat to informal/illegal income-generation is not unknown in Asia Pacific, especially around the coastlines of China, Indonesia, Malaysia & the Philippines, with their high-value, ship-born cargoes.

The range of contemporary oceans issues becomes ever broader, including fisheries enforcement, environmental protection, oil & gas rigs & pipelines, cruise boats & sail boats encircling the world, counter-drug & anti-smuggling operations, control of piracy (Langewiesche 2004), control of illegal immigration & refugee flows (Kneebone & Pickering 2004), humanitarian assistance, search-and-rescue etc. But which of these is paramount varies between regimes & over time. Five South Pacific case studies are included in King & Connell (Connell & King 1999) – Fiji, Norfolk Island, Samoa, Tonga & Torres Strait – with issues around them stretching from ethnicity to the internet.

There has been some success with the related Conference then 'Agreement on the Conservation & Management of Straddling Fish Stocks & Highly Migratory Fish Stocks'. But, as indicated by disputes over tuna among the major Pacific stakeholders & proliferating regional stock closures, the global trend remains to over-extraction & depletion of fish stocks (www.oceanlaw.net). Such a trend poses a very real threat to human development/security on islands which have come to depend on the tuna fishery as a local aspect of colonial development, then decolonization & globalization (Smith 2004)

These 'old' & the 'new' LoS issues will tend to come together around the now-postponed August 2004 10-year review in Mauritius of the Barbados Program of Action for SIDS. This follows a series of regional preparatory meetings, including Samoa for the Pacific in August 2003.

Hence the continuing relevance - intensified by the postponement of the 2005 conference - of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) - 'a coalition of small island & low-lying coastal countries that share similar development challenges & concerns about the environment, especially their vulnerability to the adverse effects of global climate change' (www.sidsnet.org/aosis) - the advocacy & negotiating arm of SIDS, which brings together heads of missions to the UN in NYC: how can 37 members of the almost 200 member UN attract attention & resources without strategic alliances with non-island states & non-state actors?

As indicated below, such island networks need to take a leaf out of parallel global alliances which have been successful in getting their issues onto the international agenda, such as ozone depletion, outlawing of landmines & control of blood diamonds. To date, SIDS & AOSIS have tended to be state-centric as well as less than successful. By contrast, the more successful Ottawa & Kimberley Processes have had advocates & catalysts in non-state communities (Hubert 2000). Maybe small island...
networks, whether global or regional (eg in the South Pacific), need to identify &
incorporate a range of non-state allies?

One means to do so is through the creation of a global or regional ‘community’,
which strives to be hegemonic or epistemic; ie authoritative. The interdisciplinary
ISISA is one way to seek such status &/or influence: onto November 2004 ISISA 8th
Conference in Quemoy, Taiwan, although most of the Association's
leadership/institutions are found inside the Commonwealth, given its high
concentration of island members. Similarly, the South Pacific Applied Geoscience
Commission (SOPAC) may constitute the kernel of an epistemic community which
may transform the image & debate about SIDS through attention to data on ecology,
resources & disasters (www.sopac.org.fj)? If it could link with the Pacific Islands
Forum then the beginnings of an effective state-non-state alliance might be in the
making?

Of profound importance to island states, in terms of both air & sea transportation, new
technologies make some surveillance easier & cheaper such as global positioning
satellites. But intense pressures remain to privatize air-traffic control & maritime
regulation, the latter having been long discredited by so-called 'flags of convenience'.
To date, by contrast to the increasingly commercialized/privatized Inmarsat (see next
paragraph), IMO has been less eroded as an inter-state institution; but clearly it cannot
offend major shipping companies, communities, countries etc. It had always been
more institutionally or ideologically 'pragmatic' than some parts of the UN system (eg
UNCTAD at the height of the NIEO debate) (www.imo.org) & now concentrates on
accidents, pollution, safety, security & training in collaboration with other major
stakeholders in the global shipping industry; ie shipowners & sailors’ unions.
London-based Inmarsat (www.inmarsat.org) is a classic case of function -
communications for global shipping - being amenable to commercialization &
privatization, so that it has been transformed from an interstate organization (a la UN)
to a virtual MNC (Inmarsat Ltd) at the turn of the century, with profound implications
for both sector & customers. As satellite communications have expanded, so Inmarsat
has been able to grow from servicing 900 ships to satellite communications - data as
well as phone & fax - for a variety of users - 250 000 in total! - aircraft, vehicles &
portables as well as ships. It still plays public service roles like global maritime
distress & air-traffic control, but its primary function is commercial, allowing it to
operate regional offices in Dubai, India & Singapore. Its five third-generation
satellites - soon to be augmented by broadband capabilities - backed up by four earlier
spacecraft enable it to pursue global opportunities:

'The Inmarsat business strategy is to pursue a range of new opportunities at the
convergence of information technology, telecoms & mobility while continuing to serve
traditional maritime, aeronautical, land-mobile & remote-area markets.'
(www.inmarsat.org)

Oceans are essential for 'globalizations' especially given ubiquitous super-tankers for
oil & gas & post-Panamax container boats for just-in-time, flexible production in
association with air-freight. But the container revolution by sea as well as by air is
very new: the first-ever container was used in the US by Sea-Land in 1956 for internal
shipping. Now post-Panamax vessels can ship efficiently & rapidly up to 7 000
containers around the world, but not through either the Panama or Suez Canals. There
is intense pressure on major ports to install post-Panamax cranes, but not all such ports have sufficient water depth for such behemoths. And no small island port is sufficiently large in terms of demand or facilities in either the Caribbean or Pacific. Today Denmark's Maersk-Sealand conglomerate is the largest container company in the world with 250 vessels & 800,000 containers; so its IT for logistics is almost as impressive or essential as its boats. (www.maersk.com)

There are also increasingly large cruise boats like new Queen Mary which overshadow island posts of call. Carnival Cruises have 18 boats each with a capacity of 1500-3000 passengers. And several major cruise companies move their liners between hemispheres & regions for different seasons: Cunard, Hapag-Lloyd, Holland America, Norwegian, P&O, Princess, Royal Caribbean, Seaborn etc.

Regional Seas

The UNEP Regional Seas Programme emerged out of the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the environment. It now numbers 13 regions, including the South Pacific which, like several others, includes extra-regional actors/interests like the US & UK. It helps to mobilize resources & attentions, but the other dozen programmes also require investments.

Some of its earlier regional projects have metamorphosed into continuing networks treating continuing challenges. So, out of earlier East Asian cooperation, 'Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia' has been developed at the start of the millennium: a GEF project implemented by UNDP but executed by IMO with headquarters in the Philippines (www.pemsea.org). Its main focus is reduction & treatment of oceans pollution around the rapidly industrializing coats of the region.

The Pacific Islands Forum (www.sisnet.org/pacific) was an early meso-level initiative from within the region, likewise with donor support, in which Australia is hegemonic, to respond to global pressures & opportunities, parallel to SADC in Southern Africa. It represents the region's states & communities on a wider international platform with a focus on development but its ideology of good governance is not always supported in practice by all members. It has a wide remit & serves to represent the region's consensus globally on a range of developmental, economic, political & strategic issues. Like SADC it was at its apex before the end of the Cold War, in the late-1980s. Global & regional institutions come & go in terms of attention, status, rankings: few remain hegemonic or epistemic for long. I turn in the penultimate section to consider whether the 'partnership' formulation or framework might now constitute an attractive contemporary format for island/ocean governance.

Partnerships for Island & Ocean Governance: desiderata for new millennium?

'Ministers...emphasised that the Commonwealth will often be most effective in advancing the small state agenda when it works in partnership with other relevant international institutions. Such collaboration is one of the most powerful ways in which the Commonwealth can pursue its agenda of action on small states issues.' (MGSS at CHOGM, Abuja, December 2003: 5)
Island & ocean governance always involved collaboration given scare resources, distance etc; but that characteristic of the LoS era is different from todays. Then, the state was pre-eminent & non-state actors (if any!) were overshadowed: no longer. Nowadays, as indicated already, to get issues on the global agenda (eg landmines & blood diamonds leading to the Ottawa & Kimberley Processes, respectively) requires a broad, mixed actor coalition like ICBL so civil society & corporate participation is increasingly an imperative (www.icbl.org) (Hubert 2000). In turn, island & ocean networks need to learn how to mobilize globally for human development/security if others are doing so already (Carlsson & Ramphal 1995, McRae & Hubert 2001). 'Partnerships' in the 21st century have become very sophisticated forms of somewhat institutionalized networks, as in Copenhagen Centre (not to be confused with the newer 'Copenhagen Consensus' advocated by The Economist & 'The Skeptical Environmentalist', Bjorn Lomborg, of the Danish Environmental Assessment Institute (www.economist.com/copenhagenconsensus)!), UN Global Compact etc; cf global campaigns around the dolphins & tuna fishing nets.

At the start of the new millennium, innovative forms of networks are imperative which regain the 'glory days' of the LoS era some three decades ago. Today these partnerships would include academic/analytic/scientific think tanks/NGOs/MNCs, however influential and would not exclude less manageable, 'asymmetric' forms of regionalisms.

In parallel with shifts in institutional centrality, there has been an evolution in the sources of creative thinking about island & ocean development since the heyday of the LoS debates. Then innovation tended to derive from the LoS Conferences & related think-tanks such as the International Oceans Institute (IOI) so energetically developed by Elisabeth Mann Borgese in Malta & Nova Scotia. In the world of the global internet, originality tends to be centered in SIDSNET, including AOSIS, along with the 12-member University of the South Pacific (USP), especially its set of research institutes & their respective island & ocean networks (www.usp.ac.fj) as well as at the University of Malta, with its Islands & Small States Institute (www.um.edu.mt/islands), with its focus on the island vulnerability index & the tri-campus UWI ('Conclusions' 2004).

Similarly, on an inter-regional scale, the proposed 'Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth' may reinforce & widen the roles of USP, UWI & University of Malta, all of whom are already networked in SIDSNET. The virtual university was endorsed by the Commonwealth Ministers of Education in Edinburgh in October 2003 & by the Heads of Government in Abuja in December 2003 following a meeting of Ministers of Education from such small states in Africa, the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean & the Pacific in the Seychelles in March 2003. Presumably, it would be open to all the Commonwealth's 32 small member states, all but seven of which are islands. And all bar two of these non-island seven are in Africa, largely in Southern Africa, the other pair being Belize & Guyana, which have almost all the characteristics of Caribbean islands & are treated so in CARICOM etc. The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) in Vancouver, BC will continue to serve as the animators & organizers of this timely initiative. (www.col.org)

Pacific Islands & New Regionalisms: how compatible/illuminating?
I conclude by suggesting that island/ocean governance in the South Pacific as elsewhere might provide lessons for established disciplines/discourses. Hence the suggestion to juxtapose the several parallel & sometimes overlapping literatures identified on p 4 along with island & ocean governance & new regionalisms (Hoa & Harvie 2003): development studies, ecology, global governance, globalizations, human development/security, informal & illegal sectors, IPE & security studies. These largely overlook islands & oceans despite both their roles in both contemporary & historical globalizations. So, together, island & ocean governance need to be brought in to this range of interrelated literatures as they are all incomplete without incorporating them. Thus political science is limited by its concentration on formal government, political economy by its focus on the formal economy, development studies by its preference for larger economies & regions etc. Such incompleteness (& hence irrelevance?) is particularly apparent in the case of orthodox international relations, as recently articulated by Douglas Lemke (2003) in a review article in World Politics on lessons from Africa's increasingly 'non-state' 'international relations'.

As Martin Shaw (2003: 41) suggests in his compelling critique of the deficiencies of contemporary 'international relations' for failing to illuminate let alone advance global understanding:

'The transformation of international relations is...very problematic. The international & the global are not two ways of expressing more or less the same idea....

In such transformation of disciplinary relations, an increasingly important role is played by interdisciplinary fields - such as environmental, communications, and cultural studies as well as IPE - which have often seen the most radical posing of global transformation. An early example, of course, was development studies...

Nevertheless, apparently sympathetic & compatible fields like development studies & IPE have placed insufficient emphasis on islands & oceans. Thus otherwise critical, impressive & comprehensive texts in these two genres, Robert O'Brien & Marc Williams (2004) & Vandana Desai & Robert Potter (2002), respectively, are largely silent on islands & oceans despite their importance in both areas of analysis. Even more curiously, a recent text on Caribbean development by Anthony Payne & Paul Sutton (2001) is likewise silent.

In short, just as new regionalisms may inform island & ocean governance, so the latter may yet enlighten development & security studies, international relations/political economy, political science etc.

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