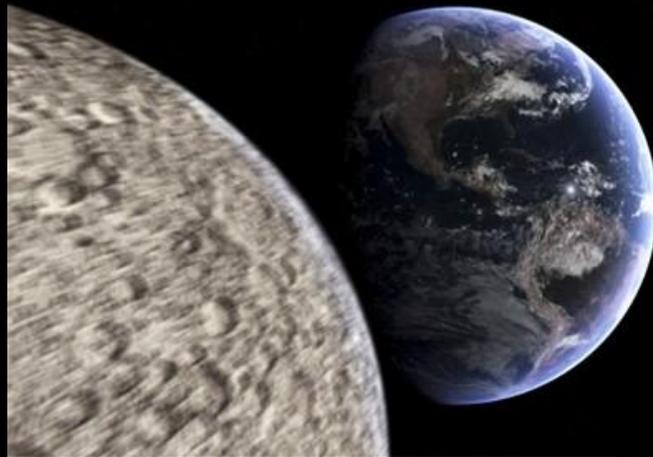


# Five solutions to make healthier trade treaties



**& Public Health  
& Social Justice**

**George Thomson, Louise Delany, Louise Signal  
University of Otago, Wellington, New Zealand**

[george.thomson@otago.ac.nz](mailto:george.thomson@otago.ac.nz)

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# Background: Treaties and health

- Trade and investment treaties are often unhealthy
  - Give **enforceable rights to corporations**, without requiring enforceable obligations from them
  - Reinforce existing inequalities because of **emphasis on protecting the interests of investors**
  - Increase **obesity and diet-related disease** (Labonte 2019)



# Background: Treaties and health

The health promotion world has:

- Difficulty engaging with policymakers on such treaties
- Lacks a simple framing of health solutions



## Principles of fair trade graphic



# Intervention

Five ways to frame the healthier solutions for such treaties

(compared to the 18 in the WHO graphic of Sustainable Development Goals)



# Framing: One

Economic activity is the means, *not* the end

- Think of economic activity as:
  - *a means to common good objectives*, including health and environment
  - *not an end in itself*
- Global economic growth as an end in itself is destructive



# Framing: Two



**Common good interests must trump business interests in treaties**

- Trade and investment treaties must:
  - **Explicitly defer to** health, environmental and human rights treaties
  - **Prioritise enforceable** health, social and environmental objectives over business interests

# Framing: Three

## Corporations must have legal responsibilities

- Trade and investment treaties must include *enforceable corporate responsibilities* for:
  - health, environmental, human rights and other common good objectives
    - Eg, corporations required to pay for environmental assessments of their activity
    - Insurance bonds required



# Framing: Four

## Dispute processes must work for common good

New treaties need to:

- Remove ‘investor-state dispute settlement’
  - the ability of investors to sue states through secret arbitration
- **Instead:**
  - Countries should use their own courts for treaty disputes, or
  - Appropriate transnational dispute systems



# Transnational dispute systems need

- Dominance of common good, not business:
  - decision makers and processes that represent wider objectives, including people with social, health or environmental perspectives



# Framing Five: The treaty-making *process matters*



*Making* treaties must be transparent and accessible

- **Allow public to see** what its government is signing up to:
  - with independent assessments of treaty impacts
  - independent avenues of citizen involvement.
- **Access** to negotiations must be equal between citizens/NGOs and business

# Summary



In trade and investment treaties:

1. Business is the means, not the end
2. The common good must trump profit
3. Corporations must have legal responsibilities
4. Dispute *processes* must be fair and open
5. The *making* of treaties must be open and accessible