

A COVID-19 Situational Report:
Beyond Aotearoa
New Zealand's Fortress

Discussion Paper 2021/03
1 September 2021

MCGUINNESS INSTITUTE
TE HONONGA WAKA

Discussion Points

A SlideShare of key points from
Discussion Paper 2021/03 –
A COVID-19 Situational Report:
Beyond Aotearoa New Zealand's
Fortress (1 September 2021)

Discussion points

Insight: What we know (and do not know) about COVID-19

Hindsight: What we did (or did not) do well

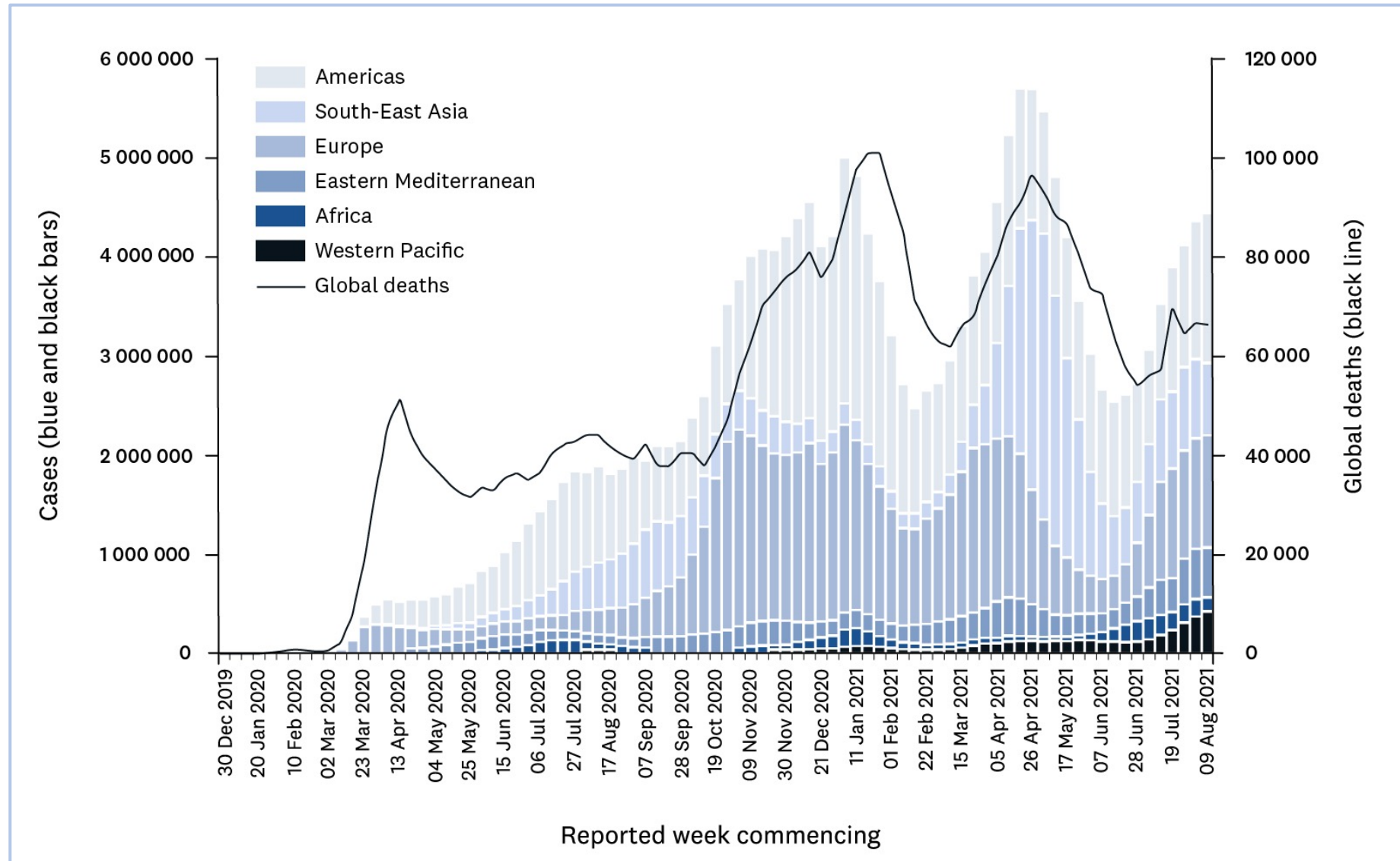
Foresight: What the future might look like

The challenges we face – a noisy world

Constitutional stress

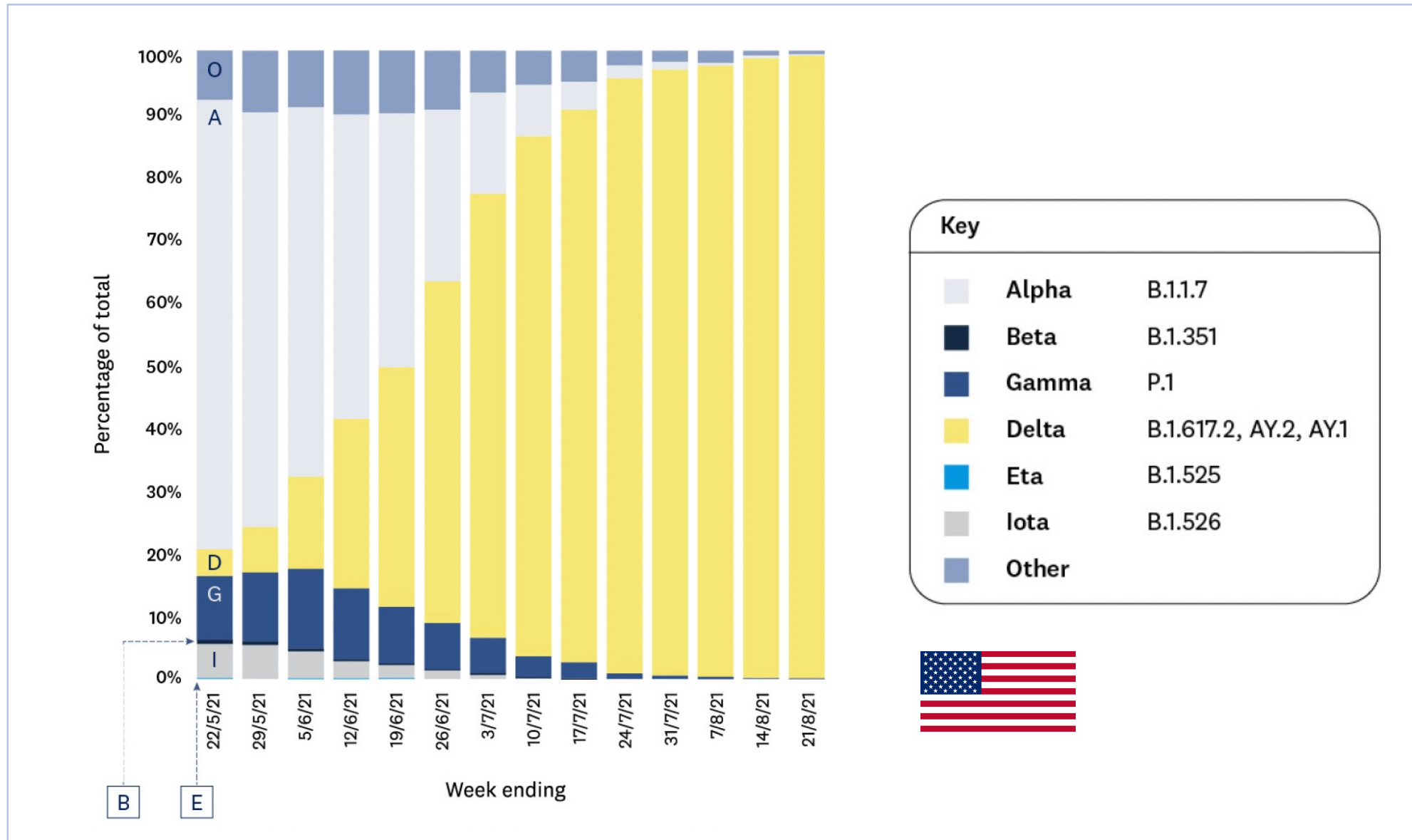
Time to build governance systems that deal with the fat tails problem

Global cases and deaths: COVID-19 is not under control



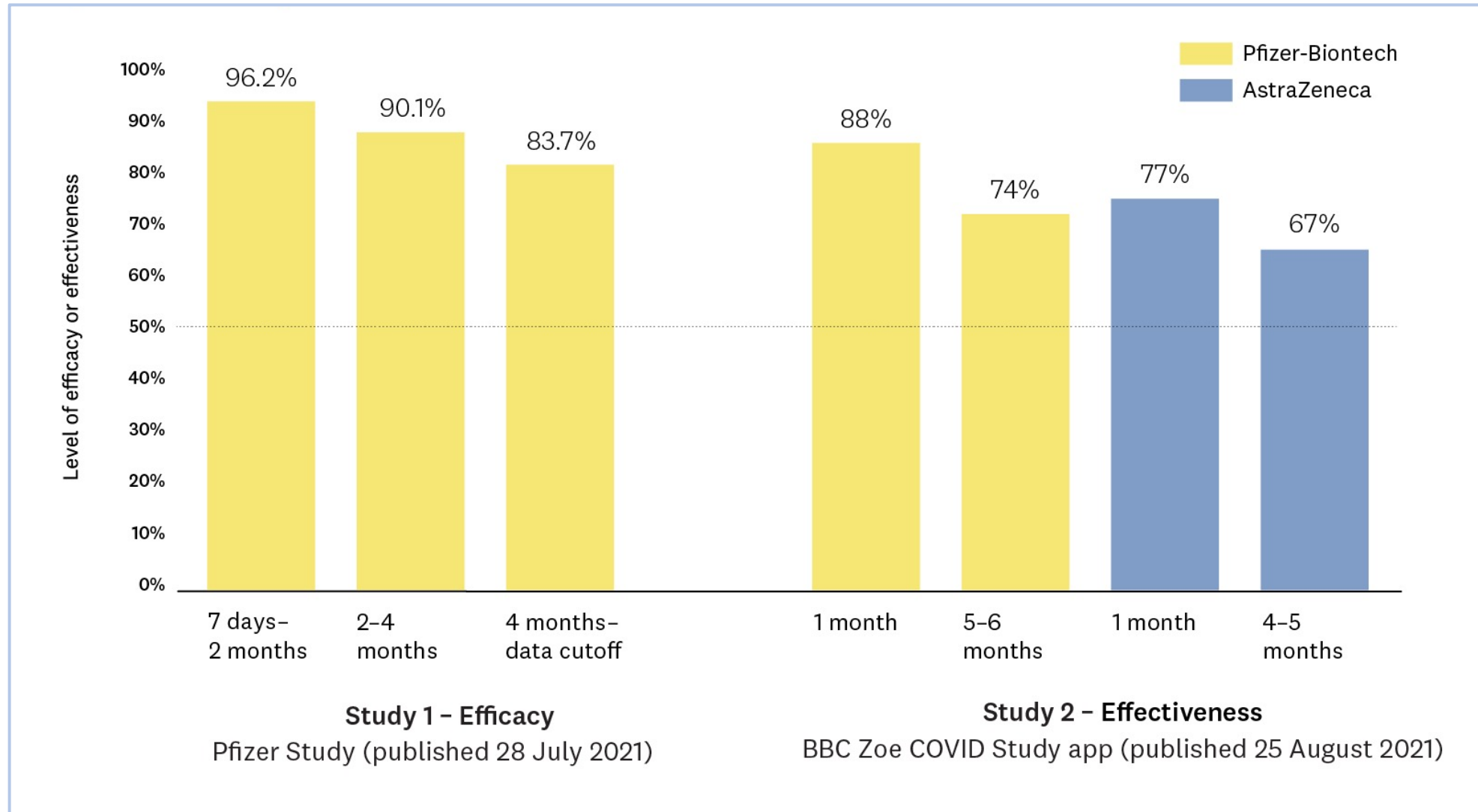
DISCUSSION PAPER 2021/03 – Figure 1: Global cases and deaths, reported weekly by WHO

Variants can emerge and become dominant very quickly



DISCUSSION PAPER 2021/03 – Figure 2: US variant proportions by week

Vaccine effectiveness is waning; boosters may be necessary



The UK Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) noted in July 2021 that there was a risk that the current environment in the UK and overseas creates a petri dish where Delta is rampant at the same time as a wide range of vaccinated and unvaccinated people socialise. This could lead to a new variant, immune to the current vaccines, emerging and spreading quickly through the community before being identified (due to testing and genome sequencing being overwhelmed).... These new variants risk severely slowing down the development of new vaccines, and more importantly, risks creating the perfect environment for new variants to emerge.

- The origin of the ancestral strain
- Evidence supporting boosters
- Why Delta is more transmissible
- How Delta might further evolve
- Extent the vaccinated can transmit Delta
- Whether new treatments and interventions (e.g. NPIs) are on the horizon
- Whether a life-long vaccine is possible
- Extent new variants might emerge or existing ones become more problematic
- Ability to manage, treat and cure long COVID-19
- Long-term impact of Delta and vaccines
- Extent other viruses might emerge or be already circulating

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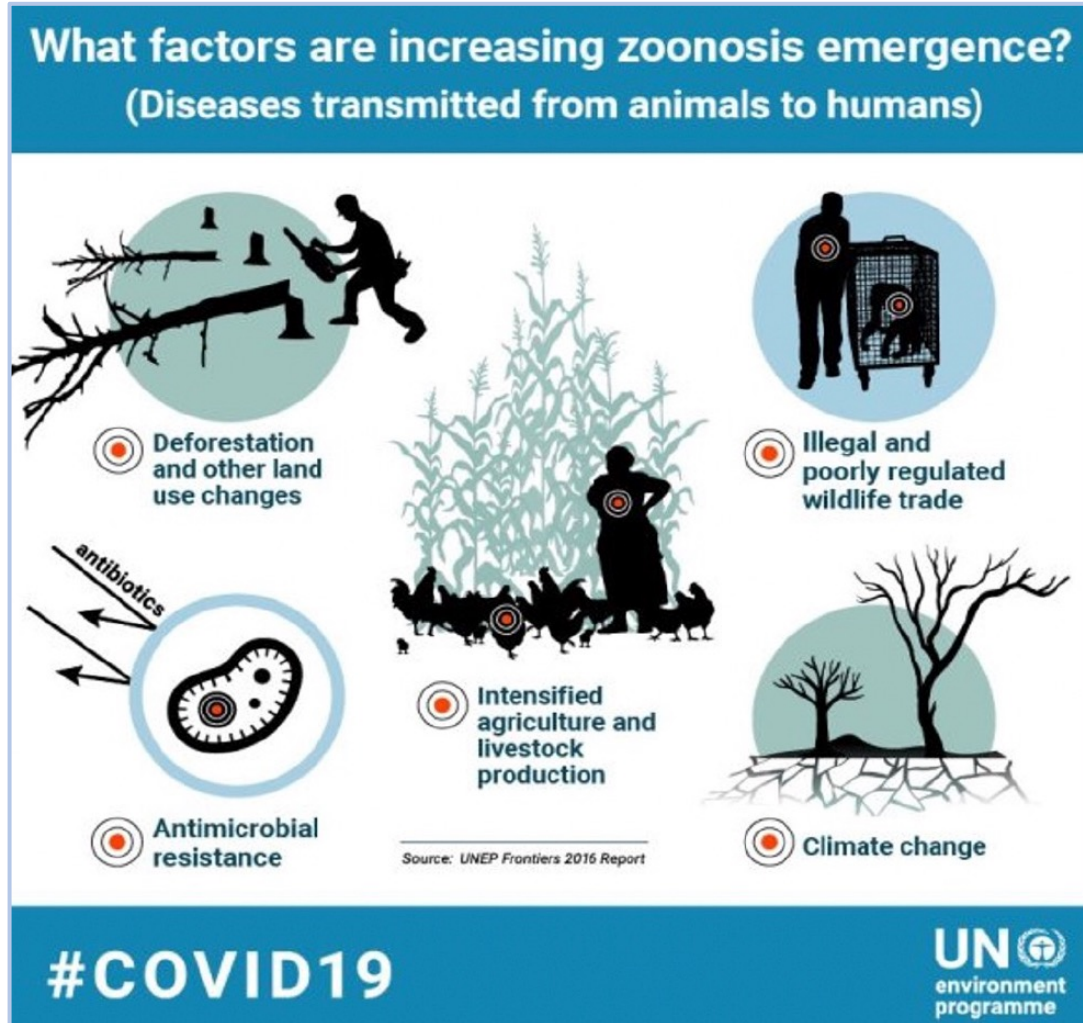
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Globally: Management of emerging zoonosis, pandemic preparation and vaccination rollout



Not called a pandemic until 11 March 2020

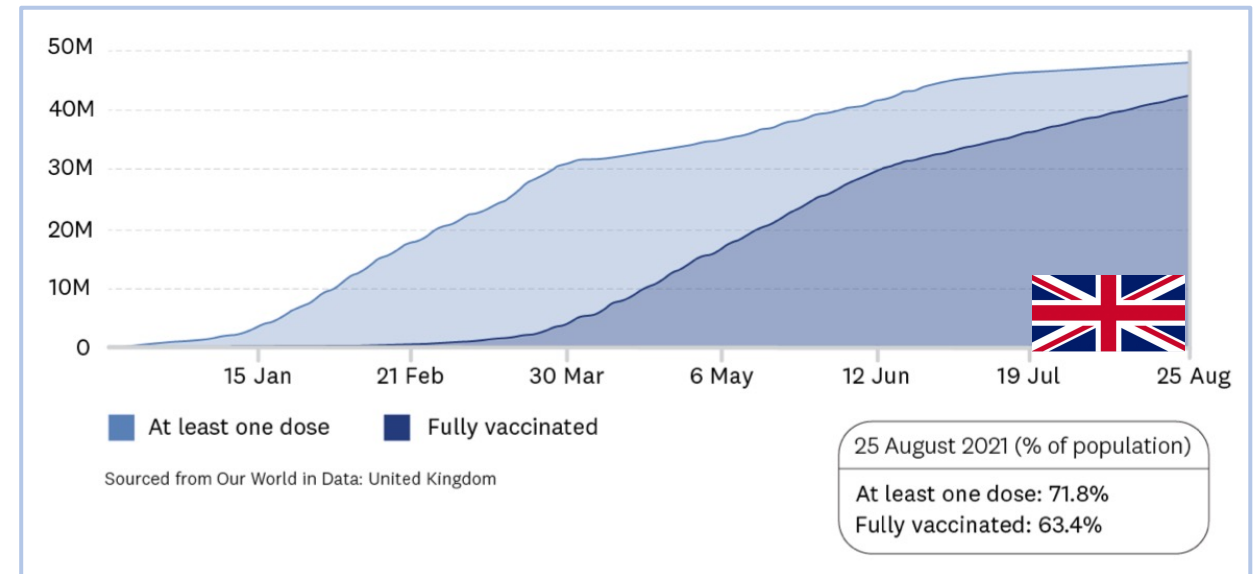
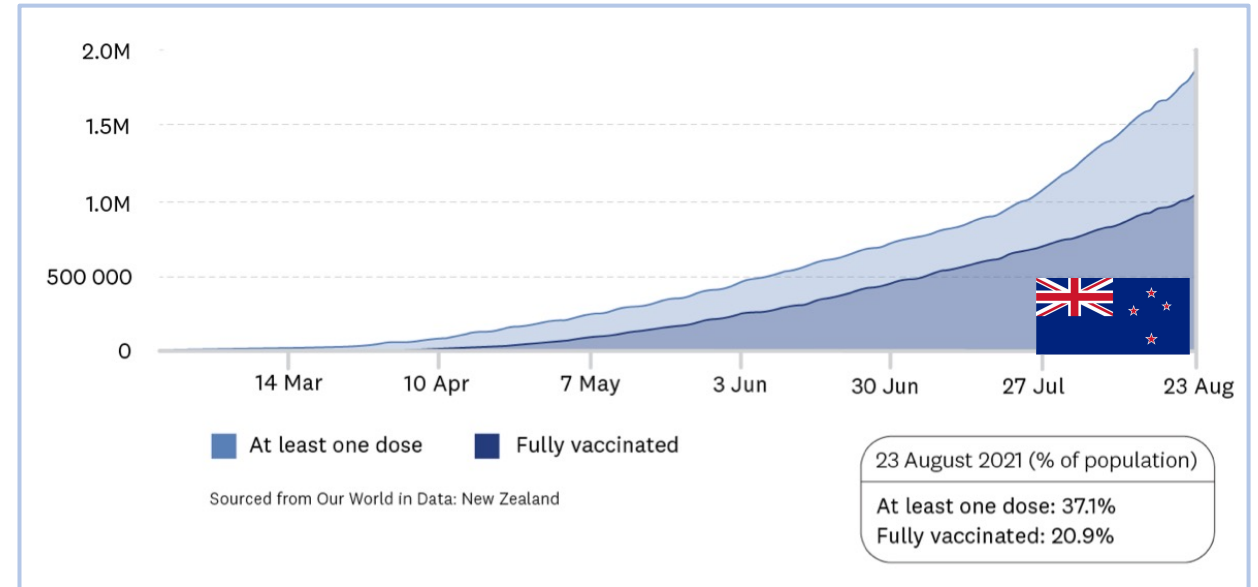
Public masks not part of the advice until April 2020 (CDC) and June 2020 (WHO)

Inequitable vaccine rollout

Lack of a global research strategy

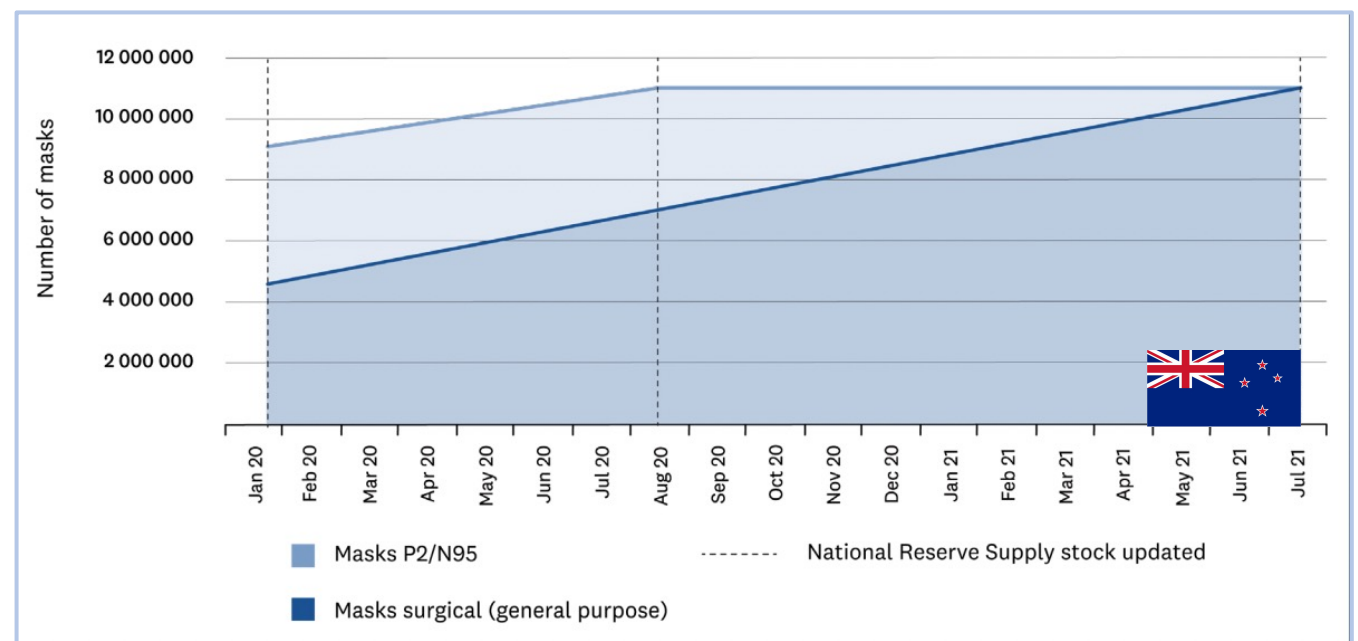
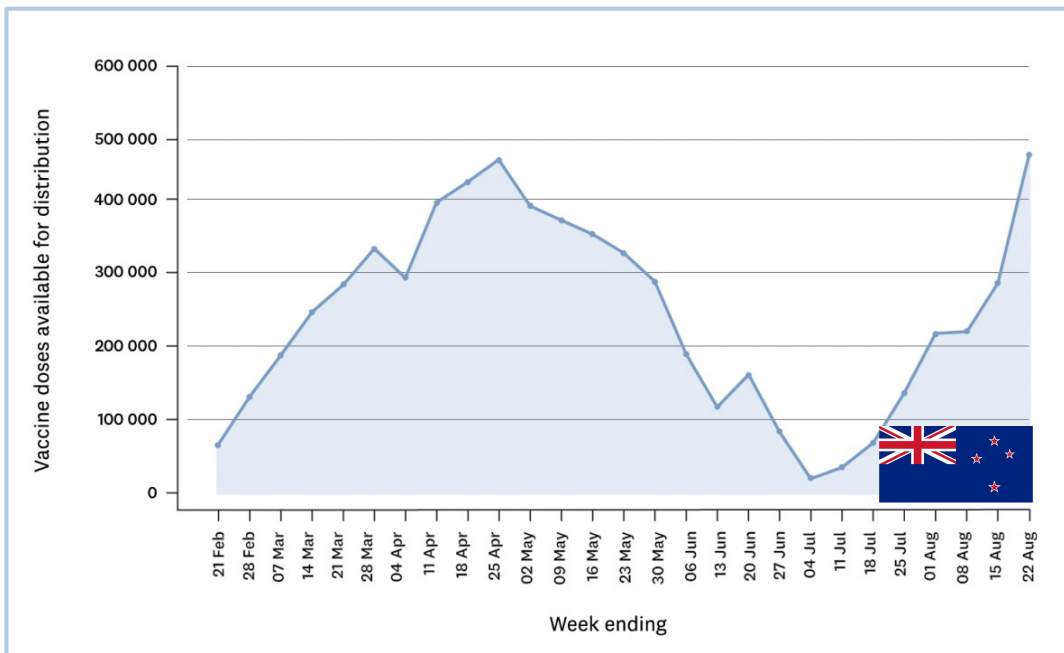
New Zealand's vaccination rollout has been slow and gaps between doses too close

New Zealand continued to focus on a gap between doses of three weeks, long after the UK found that eight weeks gave more immunity for the individual and also enabled more jabs in arms, creating better overall immunity in the community.



New Zealand's National Reserve Supply is essential; we have not focused on stock levels and logistics

- Set minimum levels
- Update the public composition of the National Reserve Supply monthly
- Audit stock monthly during a pandemic
- Support New Zealand manufacturing of masks (security of supply)



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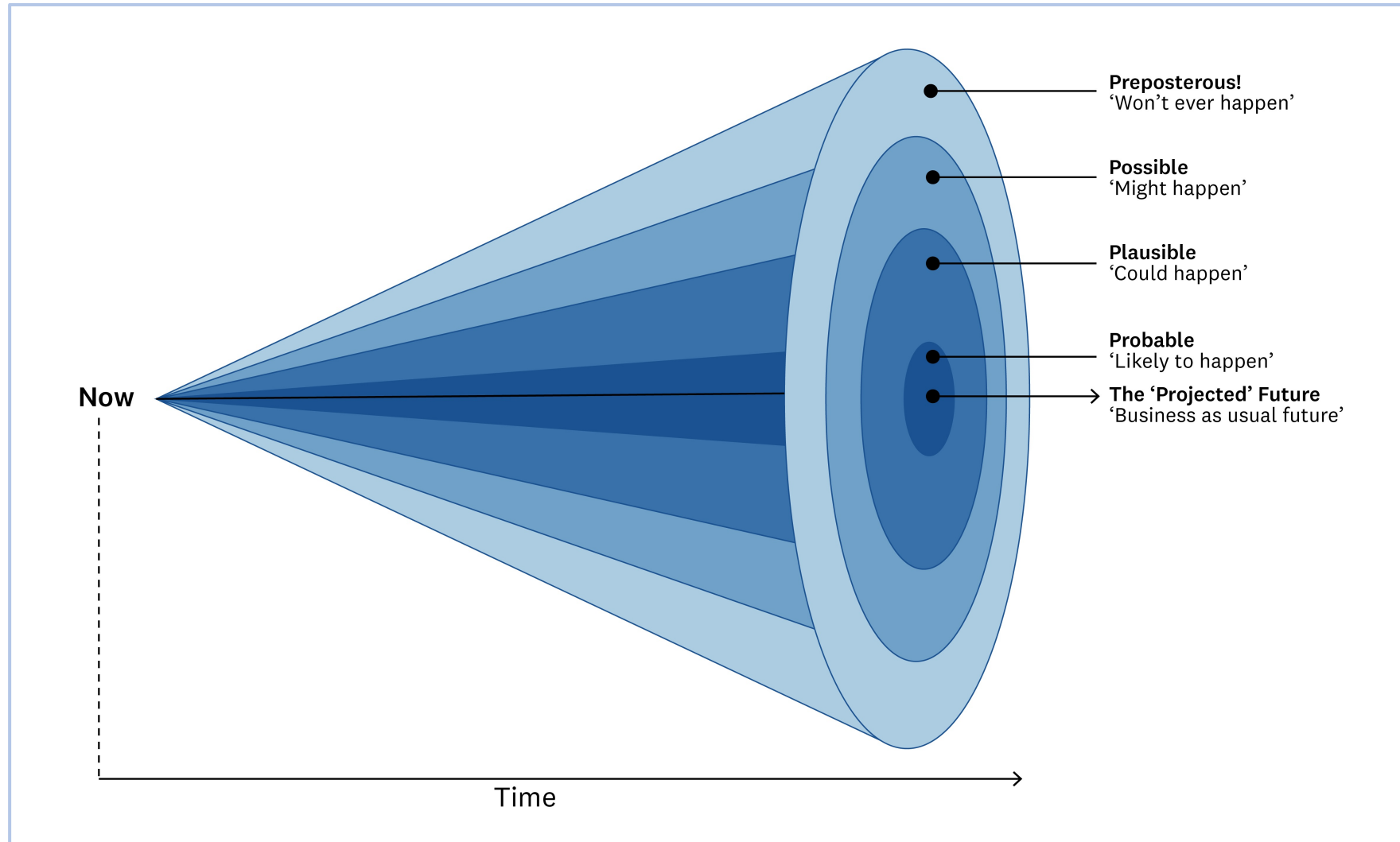
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Foresight tends to focus on dystopian futures, because that is where lessons are easier to decipher



Check List for Policy Analysts

Institutional governance and management – What have we learnt and do our current institutional settings (government and public sector) need to change to deal with pandemic-like events?

Institutional infrastructure – Do we have the short- and long-term capability and capacity to deal with disruptive events and, if we do not, what will be required to address this?

Institutional policy settings – Do our settings promote long-term thinking or short-term reactive approaches? Do we have a set of principles to shape and drive decision making?

Interdisciplinary collaboration – Do our settings promote collaboration and knowledge and evidence sharing to glean insights that can inform and shape approaches to different threats and challenges?

Information – How do we ensure that the public is best educated on evidence-based strategies and approaches as part of an elimination or suppression strategy?

Equity of outcomes – How do our policy settings ensure that the most vulnerable are prioritised? How do we ensure that we do not increase marginalisation and reinforce bias? How do red zone countries integrate back into the mainstream?



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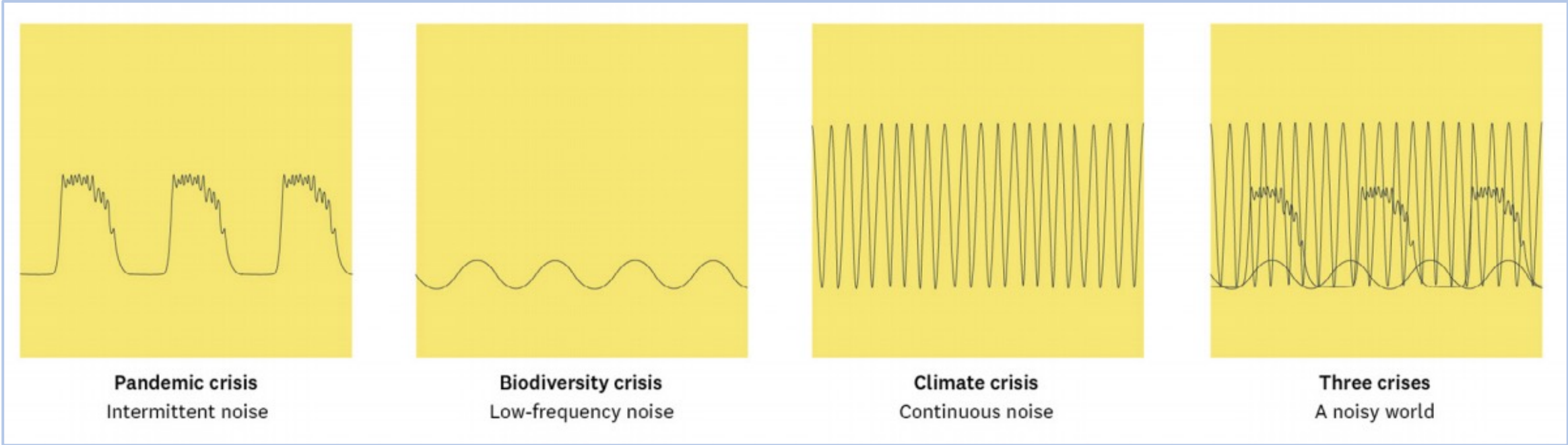
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Should we redesign our governance system for the emerging future – the noisy world?



Reviewing our overall response to date is a great way of preparing the country for pandemics in the future. These 1919 terms of reference could have been written today.

A [1919] Commission to inquire into and report as to the following matters, namely :—

1. The causes of the introduction and extension of the recent epidemic of influenza in New Zealand.
2. The best methods of preventing or dealing with such occurrences in future.
3. All matters connected with the arrival in New Zealand waters of the s.s. Niagara and the s.s. Makura in respect to their bearing on the introduction or extension of the epidemic.
4. The administration of the Public Health Department and of local authorities with regard to their responsibilities in relation to the epidemic, and generally in regard to public health.
5. The proper relation of local authorities to the Public Health Department in respect of the prevention or suppression of infectious diseases, and generally in regard to public health.
6. The efficiency of the quarantine arrangements in New Zealand.



How can we stay ahead of the emerging COVID-19 variants?

