# The Fiji Economy and Business

Justin Smirk Director – Senior Economist Westpac Institutional Bank

#2018FABF

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#### Justin Smirk Senior Economist, Westpac

- Over 20 years experience in financial markets.
- Started out as a farm consultant in the 1980s.
- Before working the RBA in the 1990s.
- Westpac's Fiji economic commentator since 2012.
- Focus is on people rather than just numbers.



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# Fiji outlook with Trump, China, & Global Trade Wars.

Westpac Banking Group Prepared for: FABC / AFBC Joint Forum By: Justin Smirk, Director & Senior Economist October 2018



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**Global Economy & Trade** 

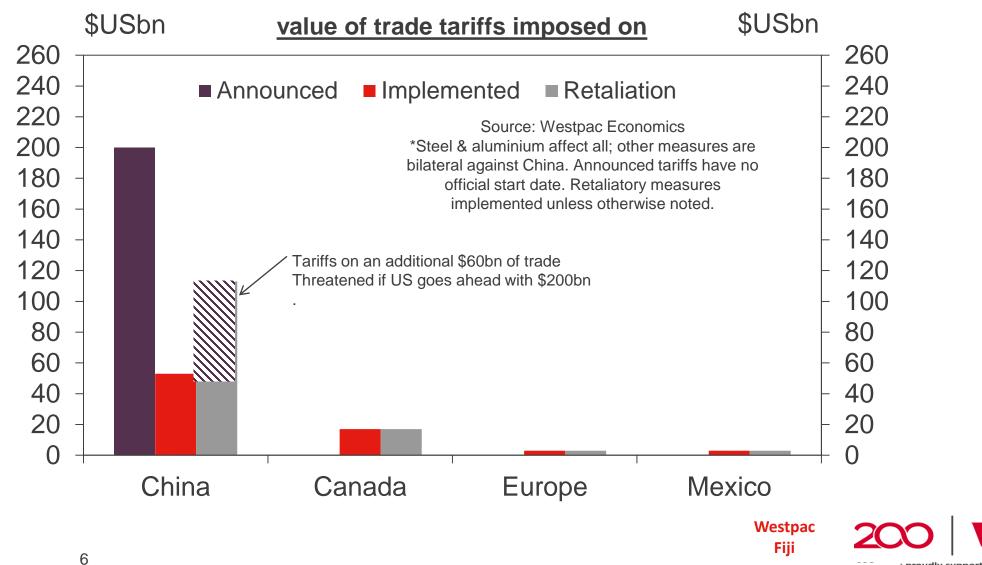
China, USA, NZ & Australia

**Outlook/risk for crude oil** 

Fiji economy

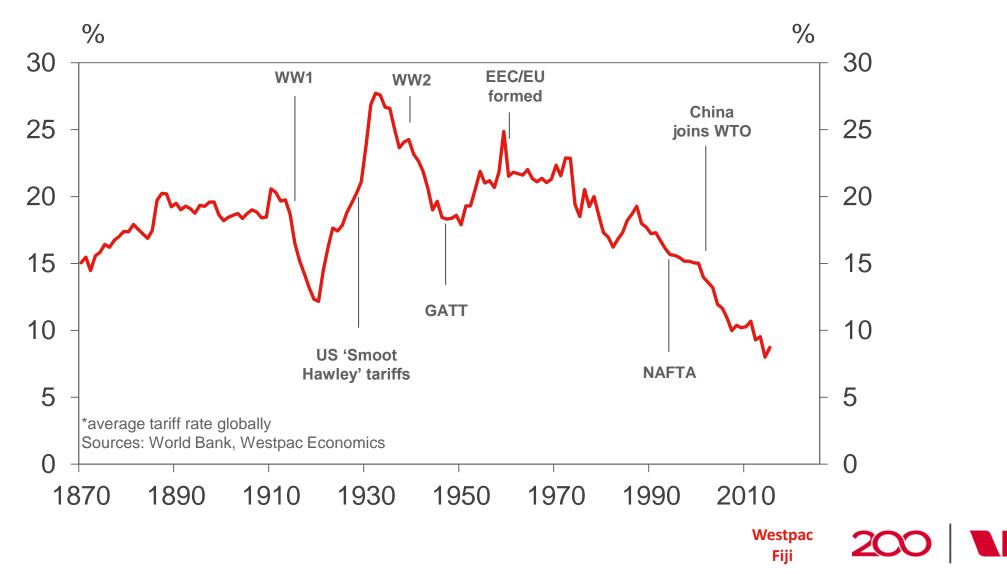


#### **US tariffs primarily target China**



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'Trade shock' risk in play



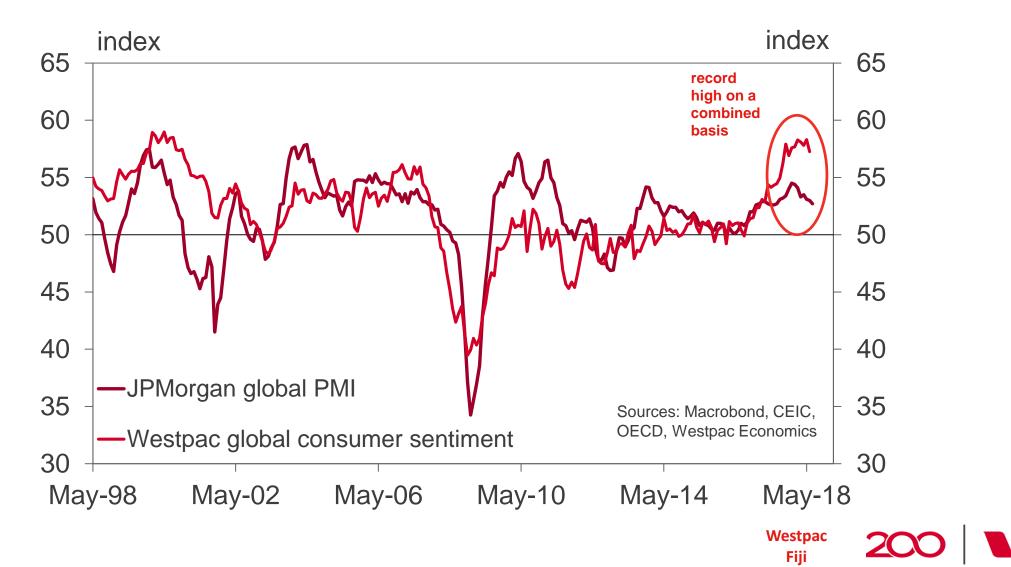
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The global economy performed better than expected in 2018

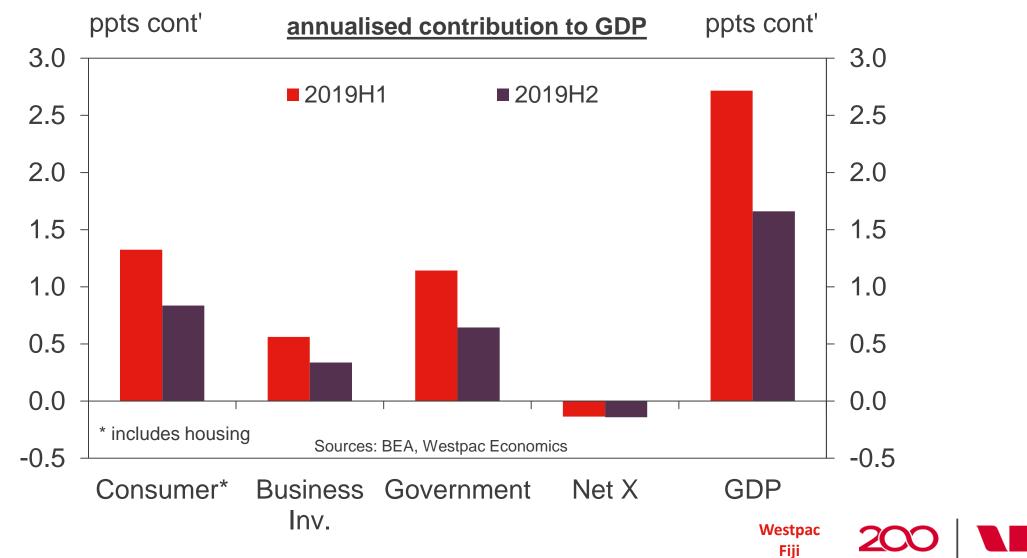


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#### **Global growth strong but peaking**



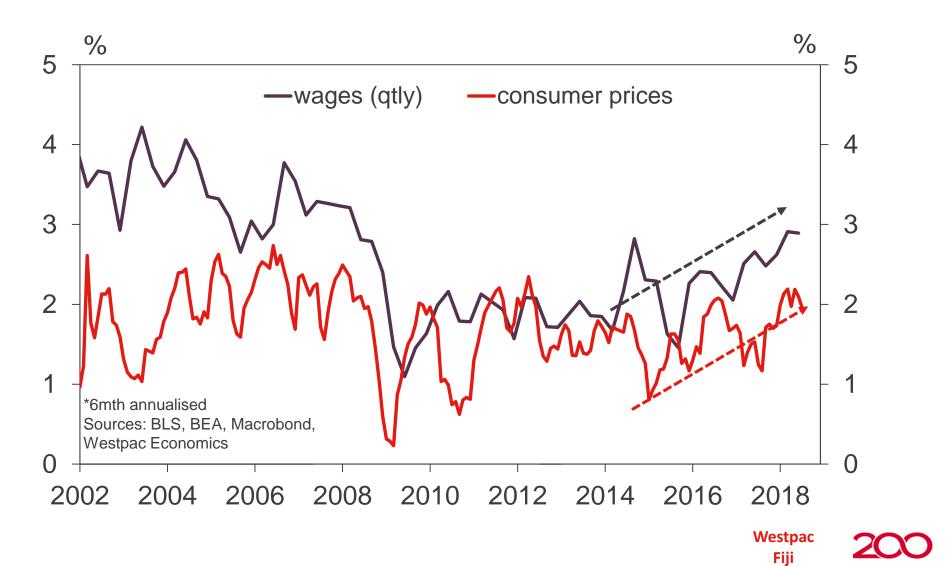
### US growth to fall back to trend in 2019



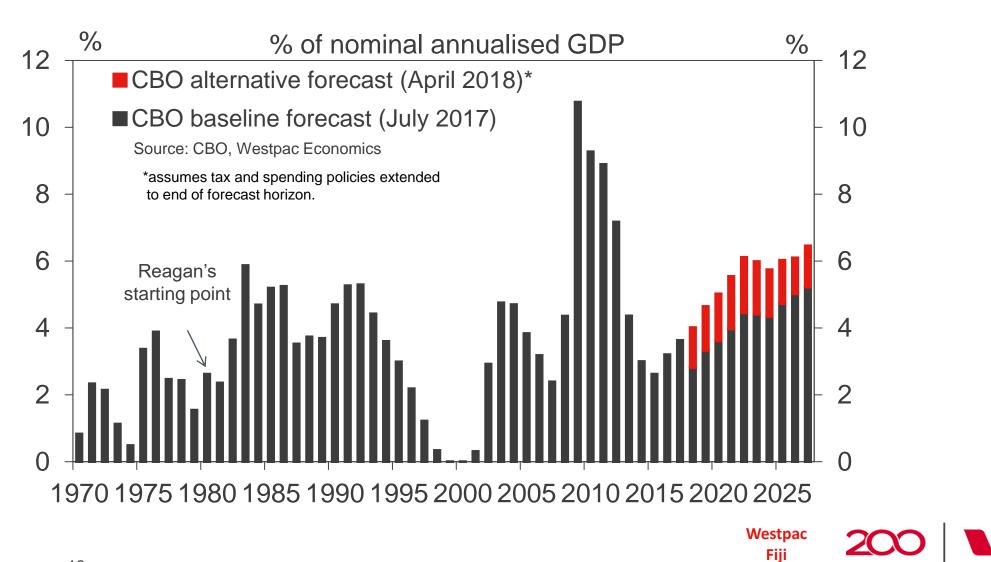
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**US** inflation lifts

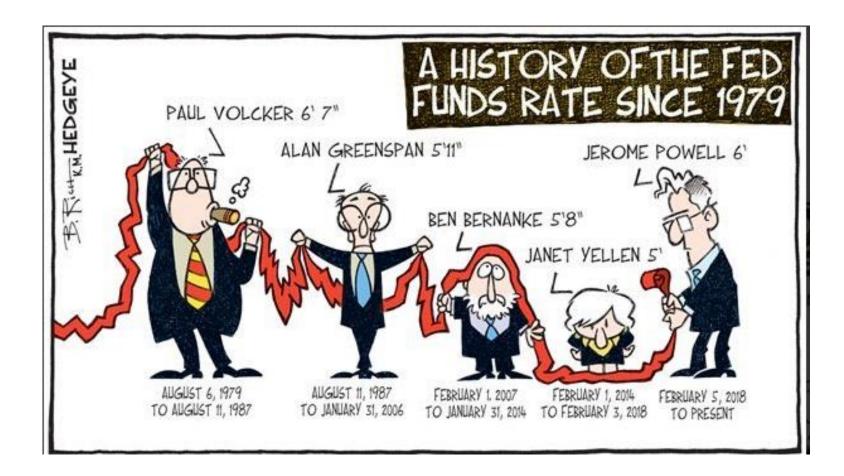


#### US tax & spending, stimulates & hits deficit



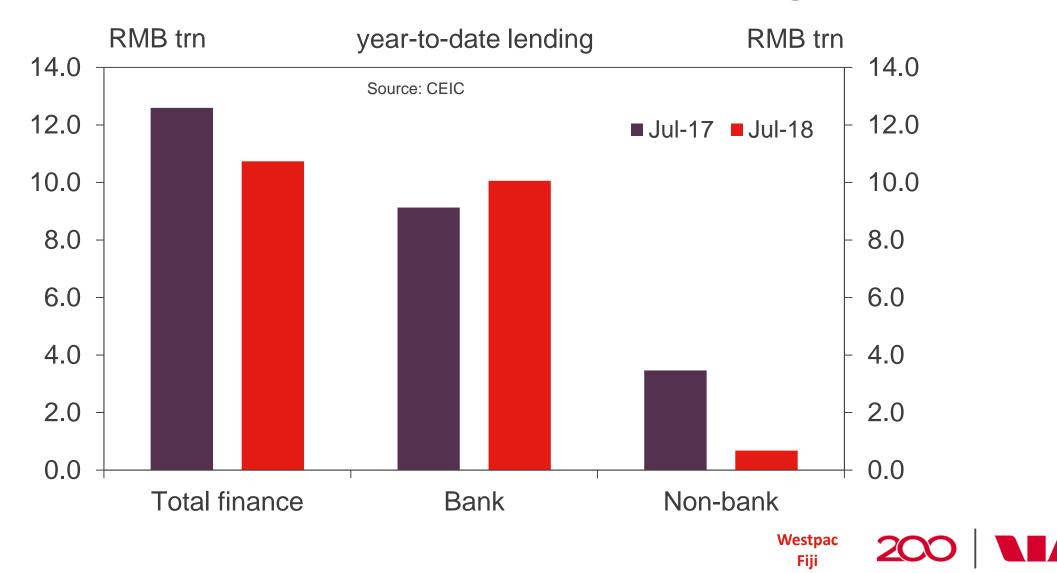
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#### US interest rates & the Fed chair.





#### China credit in 2018: a wholesale change



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## **China's Shadow Banking System**

Funded by wealth products; banks; insurance

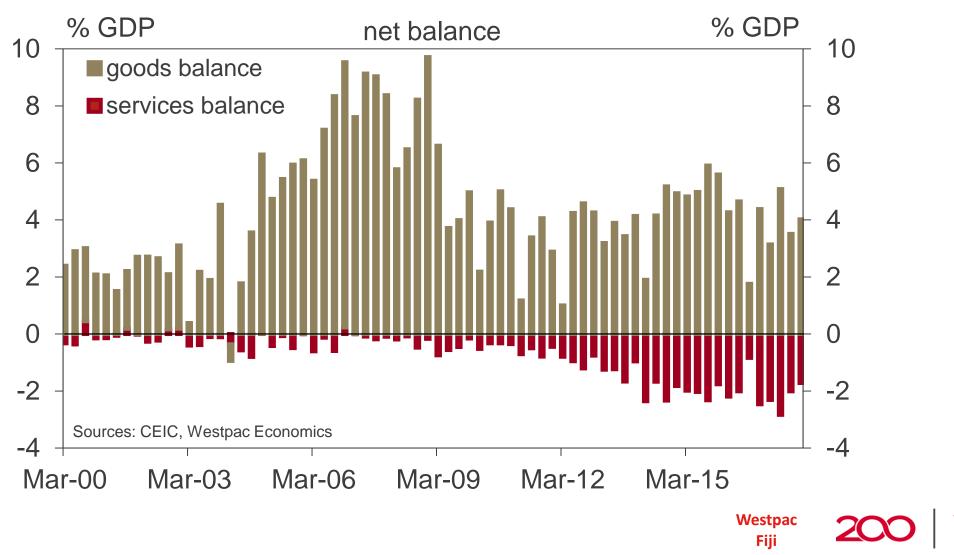
Supports

- Offshore investments
- Property investors
- Property developers
- Commodity investors
- Local Government (80% of Infrastructure)
- Corporates, outside banking system

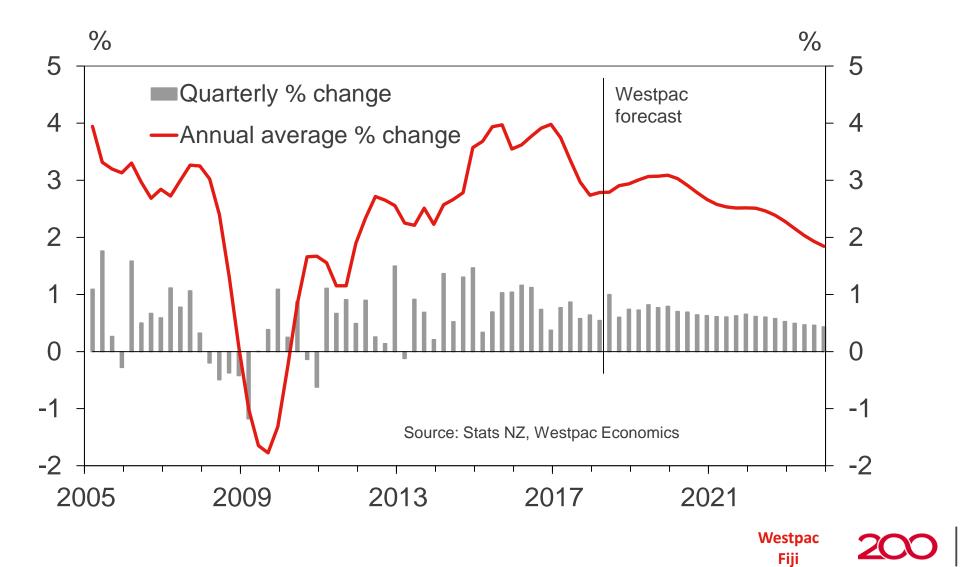
Source: Westpac Economics



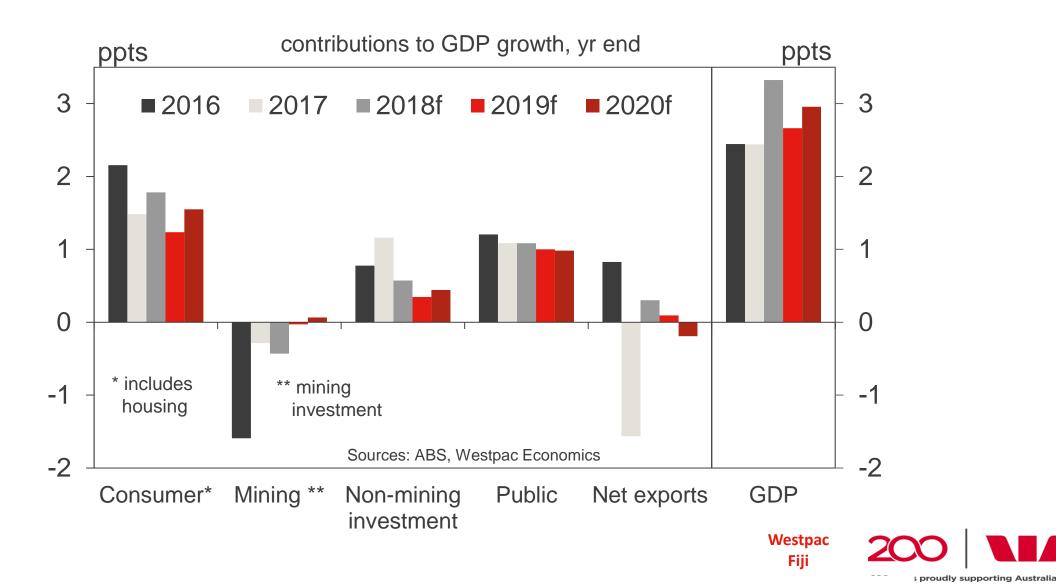
#### Chinese trade balance in goods & services



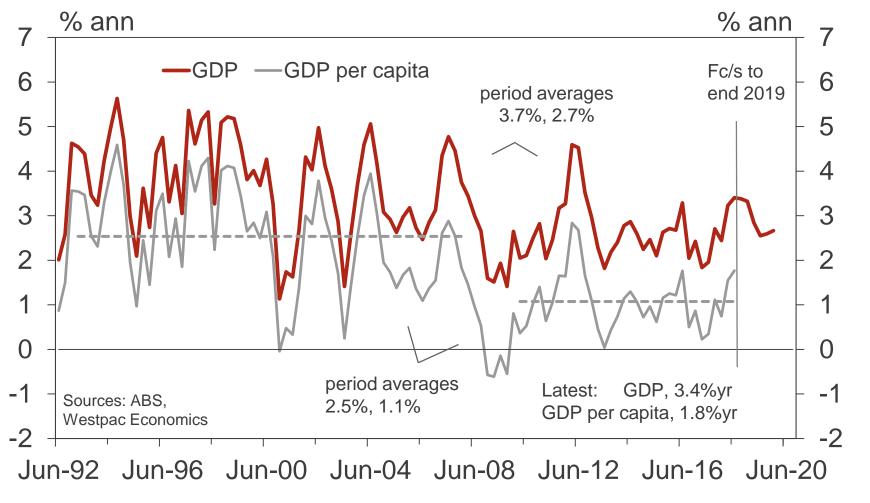
#### **New Zealand economics growth**



#### Australia: the growth mix



#### Australia: growth expected to moderate





### World growth firmer holding in 2018

	2015	2016	2017	2018(e)	2019(f)	2020(f)
Australia	2.5	2.6	2.2	3.3	2.7	2.8
New Zealand	3.5	4.0	2.8	2.8	3.1	2.9
Fiji	3.8	0.7	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.2
US	2.9	1.5	2.3	2.9	2.5	1.7
Euro	2.1	1.8	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.5
Japan	1.4	0.9	1.7	1.1	0.8	0.7
China	6.9	6.7	6.9	6.3	6.1	6.0
India	8.2	7.1	6.7	7.2	6.9	6.8
NIE's*	2.1	2.3	3.1	2.8	2.5	2.4
World	3.5	3.2	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.5

\*NIE are Newly Industrialised Economies – Republic of Korea, Hong Kong SAR, Taiwan Province of China, and Singapore.

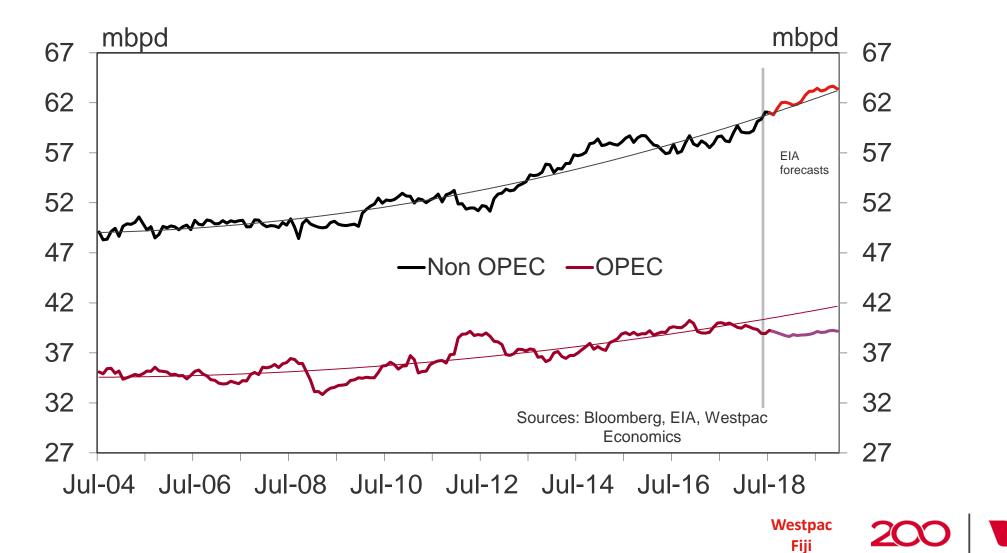
Outlook for crude oil – *in 2017/18 demand ran ahead of supply but a correction is unfolding.* 



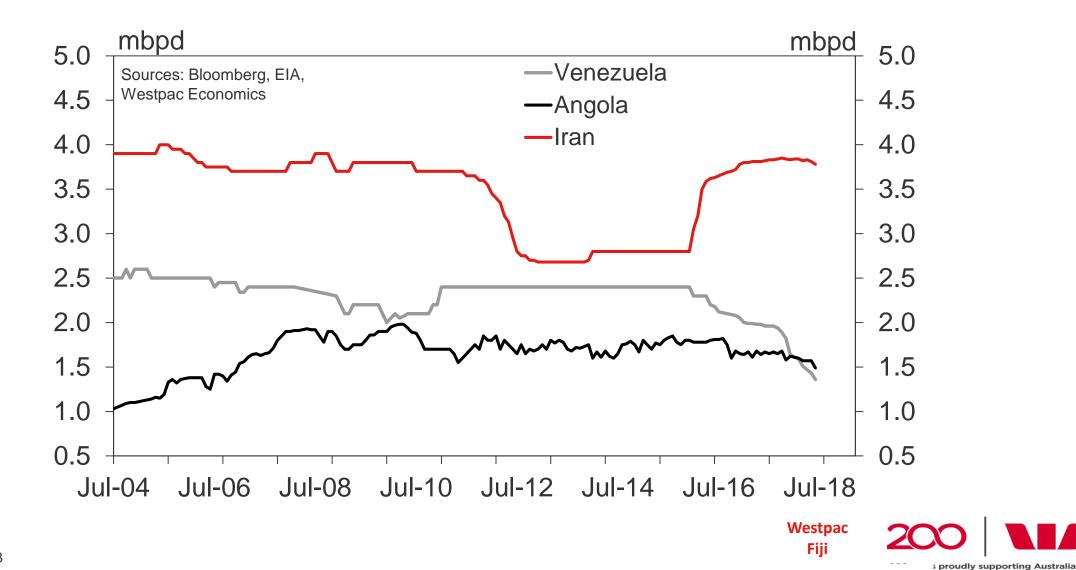
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#### Non-OPEC driving recovery in supply

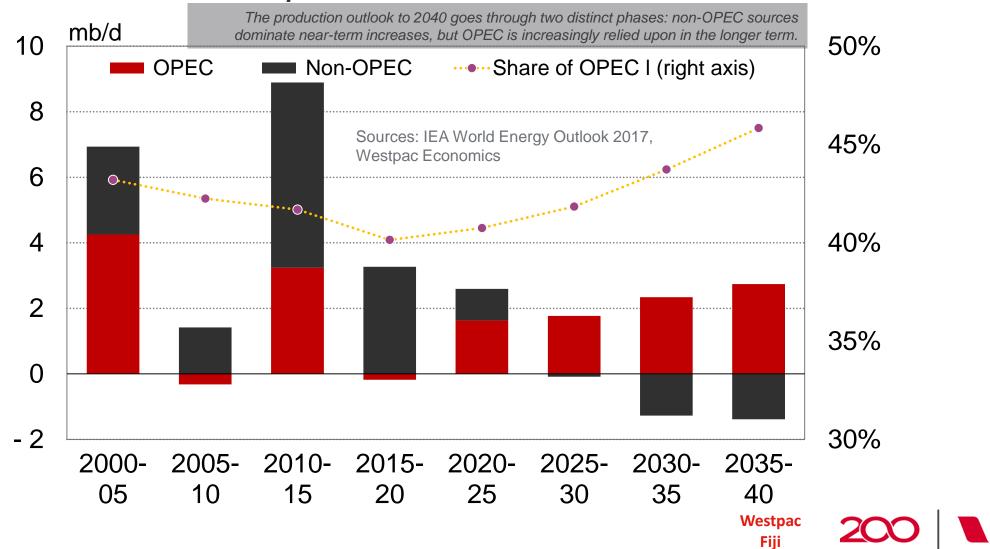


**OPEC's disrupted producers** 



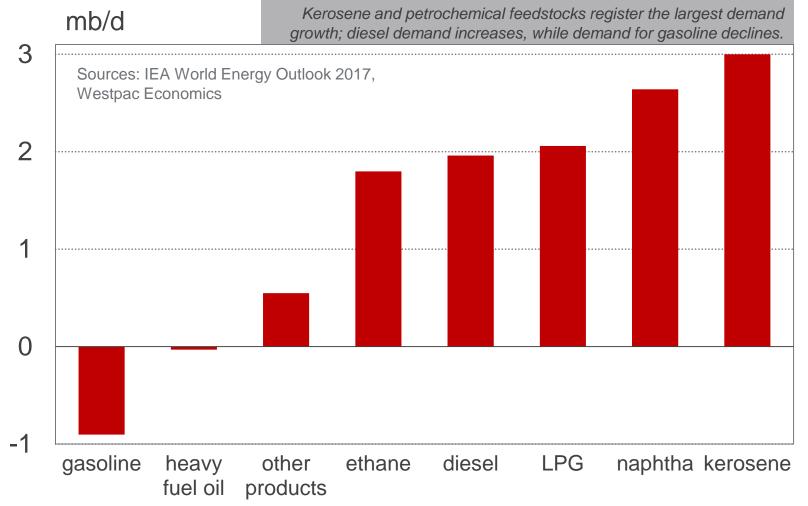
### **Change OPEC & non-OPEC crude production**

Outlook under new policies 2016 to 2040



# Change in oil product demand

#### Outlook under new policies 2016 to 2040



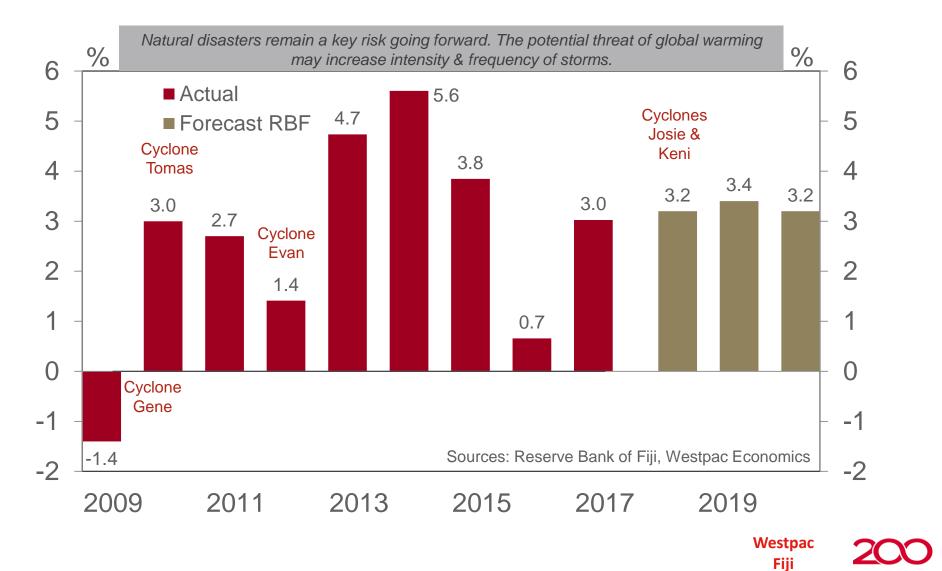


The Fiji Economy – *It has been another positive year but risks remain.* 

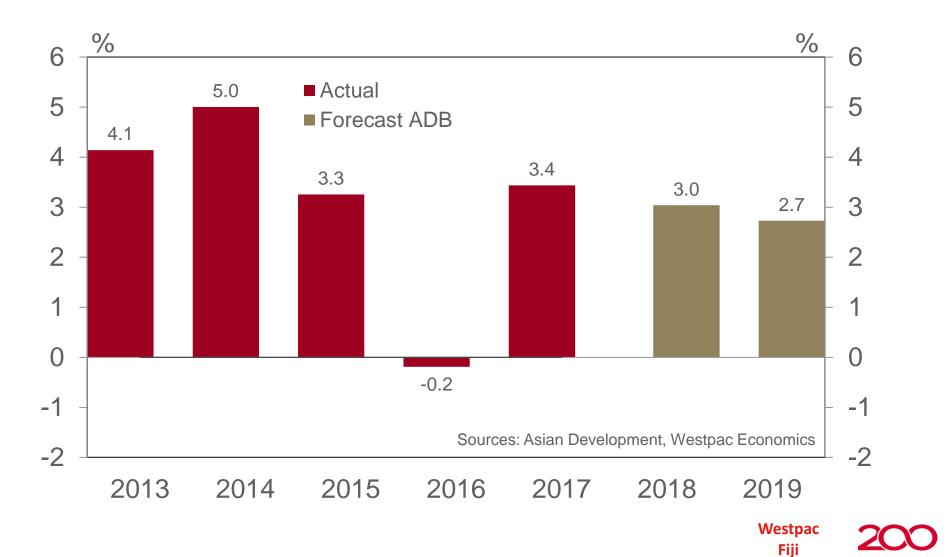


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#### Fiji on path for +9 years of expansion



Fiji GDP per capita US\$4,780



# The mix of Fijian growth

	Share of GDP	2015	2016	2017	2018(e)
Cane	1.2%	<b>0.7%</b> 1,844kt	<b>-24.8%</b> 1,387kt	<b>17.6%</b> 1,631kt	<b>0.0%</b> 1,631kt
Sugar	1.0%	<b>-2.2%</b> 222kt	-37.1% 140kt	<b>29.3%</b> 180kt	-5.0% 171kt
Visitor Arrivals	5.6%	9.0% 755k	5.0% <sup>792k</sup>	6.4% <sup>843k</sup>	3.5%* <sup>479k</sup>
Cement	0.4%	<b>18.1%</b> 328kt	10.9% <sub>367kt</sub>	<b>-19.8%</b> <sup>292kt</sup>	-21.8%* 149kt
Gold	1.3%	<b>9.5%</b> 42k oz	<b>13.7%</b> 48k oz	<b>-6.0%</b> 45k oz	<b>9.0%*</b> 25k oz
Electricity	1.9%	<b>3.8%</b> 893k Mwh	<b>3.5%</b> 924k Mwh	<b>6.5%</b> 984k Mwh	<b>0.3%*</b> 579k Mwh
Fiji		3.8	0.7	3.0	3.2

\* 7 months January to July, % change on same period last year

Sources: Reserve Bank of Fiji, Westpac Economics



# Fiji consumption spending is holding up

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018(e)
Net VAT	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>-26.9%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>11.1%*</b>
	\$794.2m	\$893.0m	\$652.8m	\$734.7m	\$450.6m
Domestic VAT	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>19.2%</b>	<b>-21.8%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>9.1%*</b>
	\$517.7m	\$617.3m	\$482.7m	\$505.9m	\$4300.8m
New consumption lending	<b>70.2%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>21.4%*</b>
	\$848.6m	\$868.0m	\$952.4m	\$1,038.1m	\$648.0m
New vehicle sales	<b>25.3%</b>	-15.9%	<b>28.3%</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>44.1%</b> *
	3,457	<sub>2,908</sub>	3,732	4,148	3,030
New vehicle registrations	<b>15.8%</b>	<b>-9.5%</b>	<b>27.5%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>14.3%</b> *
	4,264	3,860	4,490	5,051	3,300
ex government	<b>8.0%</b> 3,813	-2.7% <sub>3,711</sub>	21.0% 4,490	<b>12.5%</b> 5,051	14.3%* <sub>3,333</sub>
2 <sup>nd</sup> hand vehicle registrations	66.9%	<b>43.0%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	-30.2	<b>9.7%</b> *
	<sub>6,582</sub>	9,414	10,152	<sub>7,088</sub>	4,276

\* 7 months January to July, % change on same period last year Sources: Reserve Bank of Fiji, Westpac Economics



#### Fiji investment is more mixed

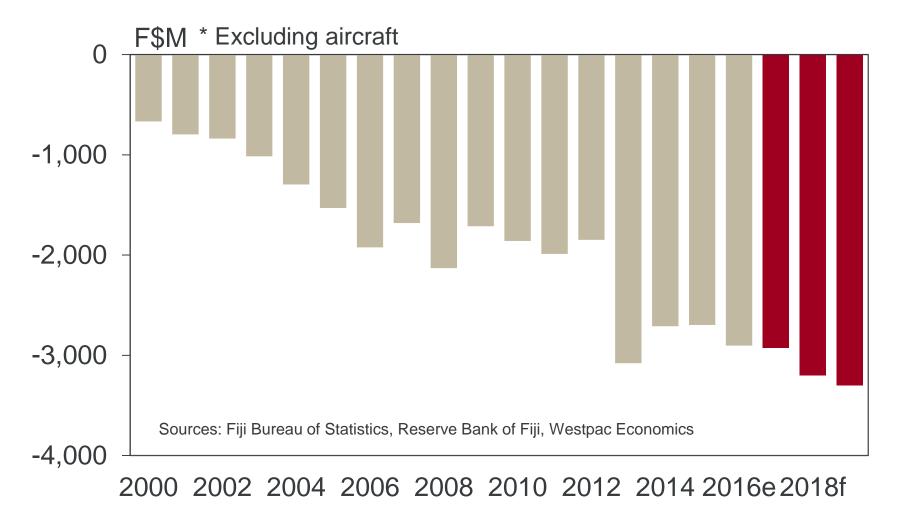
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018(e)
New investment lending	11.3%	77.7%	-10.3%	58.0%	-2.6%*
Cement sales	17.6%	42.2%	11.1%	7.5%	-23.7%*
Building permits	No 7.0% Value 10.6%	No 6.7% Value 2.7%	No –0.4% Value 11.2%	No 0.8% Value 40.1%	<b>Q1 2018</b> No 2.2% Value 26.9%
Completions	No 7.9% Value 99.8%	No 2.6% Value –5.3%	No 4.3% Value –20.0%	No 5.9% Value 25.6%	<b>Q1 2018</b> No 15.0% Value 84.0%
Construction sector growth	5.6%	5.1%	11.7%	16.8%	10.5%(f)

\* 7 months January to July, % change on same period last year

Sources: Reserve Bank of Fiji, Westpac Economics



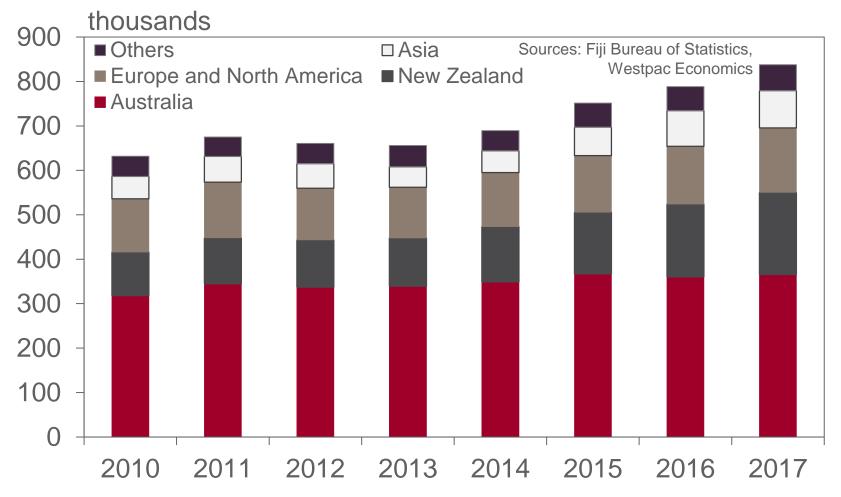
#### Fiji trade balance, deficit continues





Fiji

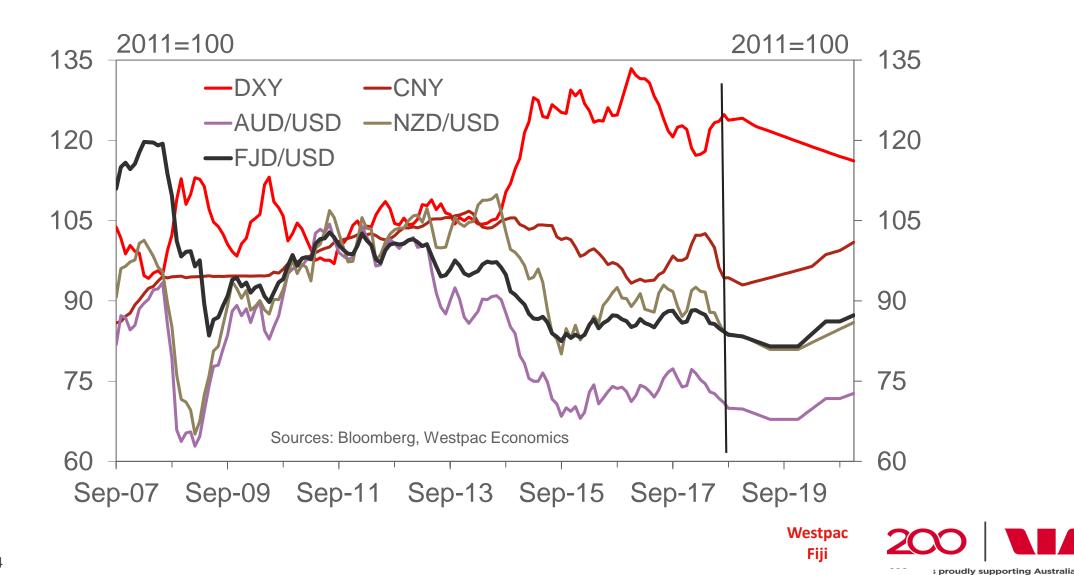
#### Visitor arrivals by source





Fiji

#### US dollar strength to hold to mid 2019



### **Outlook is positive with some risks**

- US is starting out from a robust position, China tightening credit & continues to focus on environmental and structural improvements, Australia outperformed expectations but New Zealand growth has moderated. US interest rates are rising and tighter liquidity conditions will maintain a strong US dollar narrative.
- Watch crude oil; while we think prices should ease in 2019 the risks to this view are asymmetric in the near term.
- Trading partner growth remains positive in 2019 & 2020 but to slow as Australian faces modest income growth & a housing correction, New Zealand growth remains constrained while tighter policy and possibly the trade dispute with the US results in slower Chinese growth.

#### Outlook for Fiji.

 Domestic growth supported by consumption spending, investment boosted by government capital spending, major sectors are generally positive outside of sugar, low core inflation will keep rates on hold & foreign reserves should be adequate.

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