

# Summary: Economies and Cultures

## Resources and Economies

The economies of Australia, New Zealand, and Oceania depend on various factors. Tourists travel to the region to enjoy the beautiful beaches, mountains, fjords, and unusual plant and animal life. Agriculture also remains important in Australia and New Zealand.

Most people in Oceania fish, grow their own food, and build their own homes. Copra—dried coconut meat—is an important agricultural export. Tourism is very important to Tahiti and some other island economies.

In Australia, service industries, including tourism, health care, transportation, and media, are very important. They provide nearly three-fourths of the country's jobs. Australia and New Zealand depend more heavily on farming than do most developed countries. Wheat and sugar cane are important cash crops. Mining is also important in Australia. The country is the leading producer of bauxite, lead, and zinc. It also has large fields of natural gas. Today, Australia's main trade partners are Japan and the United States. New Zealand's main trade partner is Australia.

## Cultures and Change

The islands of the region must balance tradition and modernization. Although they are remote, the islands have attracted immigrants from around the globe. In the past, islanders depended on canoes for transportation. While canoes are still used for local travel, longer trips taken today require motorized canoes, ships, or airplanes.

Outside of Oceania, patrilineal societies are most common. Parts of Oceania, such as New Guinea, have matrilineal societies.

The populations of Australia and New Zealand are varied. People worship in churches, synagogues, mosques, and Buddhist temples. In New Zealand, more than half a million people are Maori. Most others are descended from English, Scottish, Irish, and Welsh settlers. In recent years, immigrants have come from countries such as Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos to escape war or other dangers.

### Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

**copra** *noun*, dried coconut meat

**patrilineal societies** *noun*, societies in which ancestry is traced through the father's side of the family

**matrilineal societies** *noun*, societies in which ancestry is traced through the mother's side of the family

### After You Read

**REVIEW** List some factors that might have allowed Australia to have a stronger economy than the islands of Oceania have. Circle the natural resources found in both places.

**REVIEW** What else about life in Oceania could modernization affect? Draw a box around the details that compare traditions with modern practices.