

Scientists Discover Zealandia, The 8th Continent That Had Been Missing For 375 Years

Why In The News?

- A Team Of Seismologists And Geologists Have Discovered **A Continent That Was Hidden For Around 375 Years**. The Small Team Has Created A Newly Refined Map Of **Zealandia Or Te Riu-a- Maui**, Which Is Considered As The **'Eighth Continent Of The World'** That Is Beneath The Pacific Ocean.
- The Updated Map Has Shown The Location Of The Magmatic Arc Axis That Forms The Zealandia Continent As Well As A Number Of Important Geological Features. The Researchers Found It Using The **Data Obtained From Dredged Rock Samples Recovered From The Ocean Floor**.



All About Zealandia

- Zealandia Is A Long, Narrow Landmass That Is Mostly Submerged In The South Pacific Ocean. Measuring **4.9 Million Square Kilometres** In Size, It Is More Than Six Times The Size Of Madagascar And Roughly Half Of Australia.
- It Extends From South Of New Zealand Northward To New Caledonia And West To The Kenn Plateau Off Australia's East. Apart From New Zealand, The Other

Areas And Islands Encompassed By The Continent Include **New Caledonia And Other Australian Territories** Belonging To The Lord How Island.

- The **First Evidence Of Its Presence Was In 1642** When Abel Tasman, A Dutch Sailor, Went On A Mission To Discover A Huge Continent Situated In The Southern Hemisphere.
- Then It Was First Discovered By **A Group Of Geologists In 2017** And It Formerly Belonged To The **Ancient Supercontinent Of Gondwana**, Which Was Formed About 550 Million Years Ago. According To The BBC, The Newest Continent Breaks The Record For Being The Smallest, Thinnest And Youngest In The World.



Why It Took So Long To Discover?

- As A Large Part Of The **Continent Was Submerged Beneath The Ocean**, Zealandia Was Not Nearly As Well Studied As The Conventional Continents, Resulting In Inconsistencies In Its Form And Structure.
- Currently, **94% Of The Continent Is Underwater**, With Just A Handful Of Islands, Like New Zealand, Thrusting Out From Its Oceanic Depths. **Zealandia Broke Off From Antarctica About 100 Million Years Ago** And Then **From Australia About 80 Million Years Ago**.

