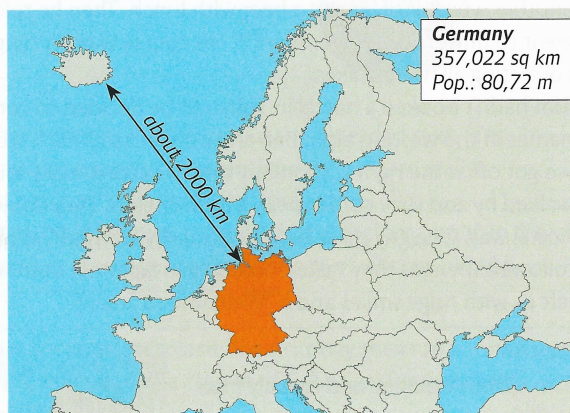
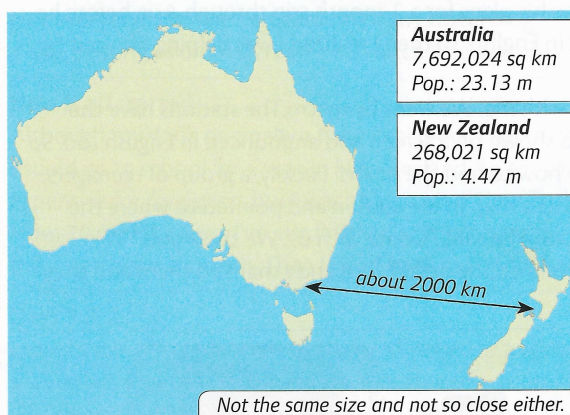


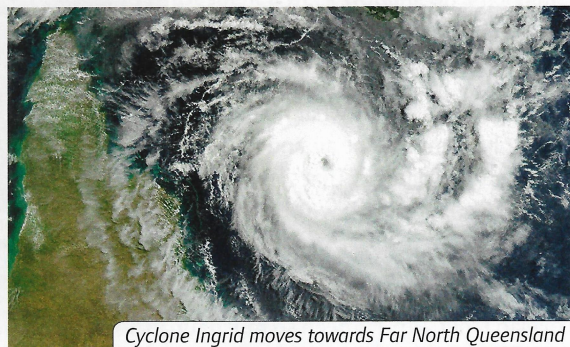
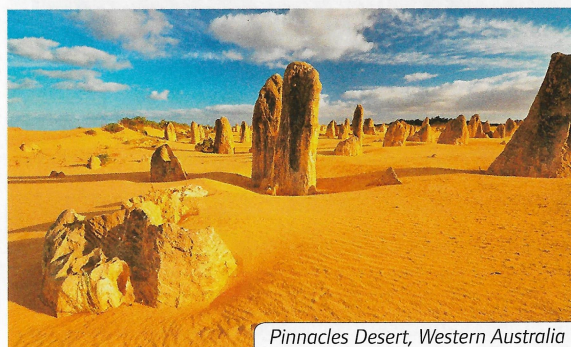


Down Under: Australia and New Zealand

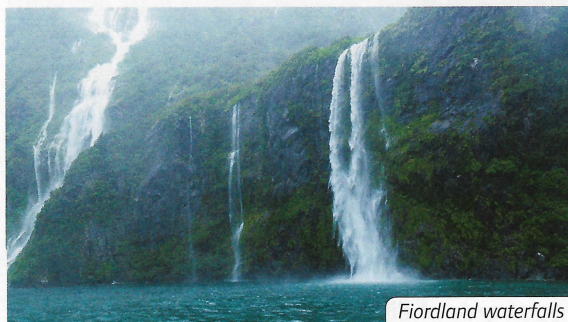
People call Australia and New Zealand *Down Under*, and in some ways the two countries are similar. In others, they are very different. Compare their **size and location**. And compare them with Germany too.



There are big differences in **climate and geography**. As a continent, **Australia** has different climate zones and landscapes. The coastal lands in the south have a Mediterranean climate with rolling hills and some mountains. In the west, there are deserts inland where the flat, red earth stretches endlessly to the horizon. The north is warm and humid, with monsoons and cyclones, and the world's largest coral reef.



New Zealand has a mild climate. The surrounding ocean gives the country very changeable weather, with strong winds and high rainfall in the west. The landscape is mountainous (Aoraki/Mt Cook 3,724m) with the Southern Alps on the South Island and large, active volcanoes like Mt Ruapehu (2,697m) on the North Island. Lying on the boundary of the Pacific and Australian plates, New Zealand has 15,000 earthquakes a year, 100 to 150 of them large enough to be felt.



Australia and New Zealand have been separated for about 80 million years, so their **wildlife** is now very different.

In **Australia**, there are quite a few dangerous animals, like the saltwater crocodile in the tropical north. It can grow up to 6m long and about two people a year are killed by them. Many more are attacked and badly hurt.



Saltwater crocodile

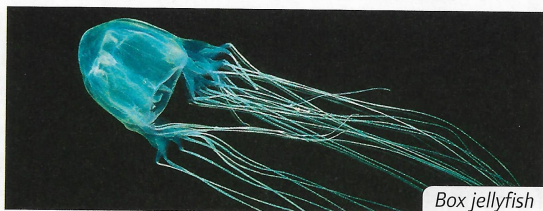
Poisonous animals are also common in Australia, including many of the world's most venomous snakes. The inland taipan has the most powerful venom of any land snake in the world. It can kill a human in 45 minutes. There are also very poisonous spiders like the redback and the Sydney funnel-web.



Inland taipan

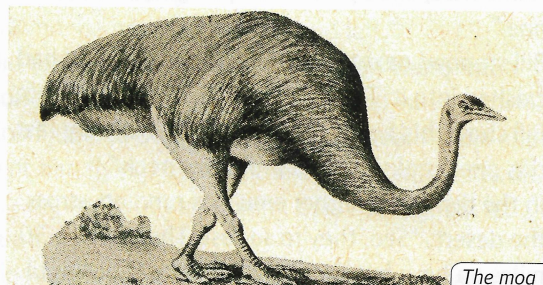
And don't think you're safe in the sea. The box jellyfish has the most painful sting in the world, like being hit by lightning. One animal has enough venom to kill 60 humans.

Between 1983 and 2016, 64 people died as a result of being stung by box jellyfish, about 2 people a year.



Box jellyfish

New Zealand has no dangerous or poisonous animals. There are no snakes and the country was once a paradise for birds, with no mammals (just a few bats), until humans arrived about 800 years ago. Humans hunted the moa – the biggest were about 3.6m high – to extinction. As a result, the Haast's eagle, the largest ever to live on earth, and which hunted moa for food, died out too.



The moa

Humans also brought mammals with them – rats, stoats, possums, cats – which are a great danger to New Zealand's native birds and forests. Many birds, including the national bird, the kiwi, are in danger of extinction.

This is a problem New Zealand shares with Australia, where rabbits, camels and other animals introduced by settlers damage the environment.



Kiwi

- a) 🧠 From what you have read, explain which of the two countries you would prefer to visit.
- b) Produce a page with text and pictures comparing another aspect of Australia and New Zealand, e.g. the outdoor life, the native people and settlers, the economy, culture ...