

Disaster and their legacies in coastal ecosystems – recovering from natural and unnatural events

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Most restoration attempts are responses to impact accumulated over time. Major impacts can occur, however, through short-term or cataclysmic events. Here we present some lessons from two large coastal recovery programmes, both of which began in 2011. The first was a series of earthquakes that not only destroyed much of the city of Christchurch but also reconfigured an estuary through massive liquefaction. The second was New Zealand's worst oil spill that occurred off the coast of Tauranga. These are the sorts of ecological 'surprises' that cannot be anticipated but which must be managed pretty much instantly from their onset. In both cases, recovery involved large numbers of people, including scientists, iwi, citizens, stakeholder groups and managers. We discuss these programmes, lessons learned and the need for both short- and long-term perspectives.