Who has the most sunshine?  
The battle for the most attractive destination

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Lincoln University
Outline

• Research context
  – Interaction of climate, weather & tourism
• ‘Marketing’ climate
• Research objectives
• Method
  – Archive analysis > RTO analysis
• Results
• Implications
• Future research
Climate, weather & tourism

- Impacts on destination attractiveness
- Visitation
- Activity participation & satisfaction
- Safety & health risks
- Overall satisfaction
“Weather can ruin a holiday, but climate can ruin a destination”

Daniel Scott
Chairperson, WMO Commission on Climatology
Expert Team on Climate and Tourism
Climate is defined as the prevailing condition observed as a long term average in a location. In contrast, weather is the manifestation of climate at a specific point in time and place.

Scott & Lemieux, 2009. p. 30
‘Marketing’ climate

- “Incredibly clear, starry nights, brilliant sunny days”
  Aoraki Mount Cook Mackenzie Visitor Guide

- “Nelson region combines the finest elements of the New Zealand experience and delivers them across stunning geography, sun-ripened at the perfect latitude under New Zealand’s highest sunshine hours” www.nelsonnz.com/

- “Hawkes Bay is renowned for its Mediterranean climate with long hot summers and mild winters. The pleasant and settled weather is one of the prime reasons to visit” www.hawkesbaynz.com/Visit/abouthawkesbay/Weather/

- “Okay, so it does cool down a little in winter and yes, it rains sometimes but you get that in a subtropical climate” Northland Visitor Guide

- “Dramatic West Coast landscapes are matched with dramatic weather” www.westcoastnz.com
‘Experiencing’ weather
Method

- Identification of significant summer weather events
  - NIWA climate summaries
  - Meteorological Society Newsletters
  - Electronic database search

- Content analysis of newspaper articles
  - Weather & tourist/tourism interactions
  - Weather impacts
  - Weather information a key theme

- RTO website analysis
  - 29 RTO websites
  - Climate/weather content, climate data, current weather data, tourist information
Newspaper archive analysis

• Accuracy & presentation of climate/weather data (> 50 articles)

• Three sub-themes
  – Perceived (mis)representation of climate/weather information
  – Spatial variability
  – Forecasting
(Mis)representation of climate/weather information

- Higher temperatures and sunshine hours positives, rainfall negative
- Longer-term climatic averages based on daily data

- Temperature
  - Accurate readings
  - Location of weather stations
  - Timing of readings

- sunshine hours
  - Location of gauges
  - Accuracy of readings
“Tourism Coromandel takes a dig at forecasters”
Radio New Zealand Newswire, 20 Jan 1999

“Temperature rises over heat in the city”
Northern Advocate, 4 Feb 2002

“Sunny start may give Tauranga its day in the sun”
Bay of Plenty Times, 12 Feb 2007

“We’ve got back our sunshine”
Whakatane Beacon, 13 Jan 2006, p.1

“Shine taken off town’s pride”
New Zealand Herald, 22 Jan 2009, p.A03

“Misleading TV weather may cost Bay millions”
Sunday Star Times, 17 Jan 1999, p.3

“New weather station puts heat on TV temperatures”
Hawke’s Bay Today, 12 May 2005, p.1

“Weather site shift to improve city’s image”
The Dominion, 20 June 1995, p.3

“Kaikoura tries warmer image”

“Misleading forecast puts dampener on Akaroa’s summer yachting”
Christchurch Mail, 19 Jan 1998

“Bid to improve perceptions over weather”
Otago Daily Times, 22 Sep 2005

“Dunedin sunshine records questioned”
Otago Daily Times, 5 Jan 2002

“Drena bounces back to silence MetService doubters”
The Daily News, 13 Jan 1997, p.6

“New weather station means more accurate Bay temperatures”
The Bay Chronicle, 18 Feb 2005

“Storm brewing over TV forecasts”
New Zealand Herald, 30 Oct 200, p.A01

“Latest statistics do little to kick the gumboot image”
The Daily News, 13 Jan 1999, p.6

“Site switch will see temps rising in city”
The Daily News, 9 Mar 2000, p.1

“Take that, Tauranga – NP has more sun”
The Daily News, 10 Jan 2002, p.1

“Mayor hot on the trail of Motueka’s missing sunshine”
Nelson Mail, 8 Mar 2001, p.1

“We’re the sunniest”
Nelson Mail, 31 Dec 2009, p.1

“Met Service to meet tourist operators”
West Coast Times, 25 Jan 1995

“Coast tries to shake off wet image”
The Press, 8 Sept 1998, p.3

“Weather forecasts annoy camp owners”
Westport News, 28 Dec 2000

“Milford Sound on TV weather map”
Southland Times, 22 May 2009, p.1

“Bad weather image in term ‘Deep South’”
Southland Times, 3 May 1997, p.6

“It’s official – we have the best weather maps, despite climate”
Southland Times, 21 Nov 2000

“Duna bounces back to silence MetService doubters”
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“It’s official – we have the best weather maps, despite climate”
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Spatial variability

• Rain forecasts a particular concern
  – Rain often localised – not entire regions
  – Taranaki, West Coast, Northland

• Bad weather image
  – “Gumboot image” – Taranaki
  – “Why is the West Coast so Wet?” – Te Papa exhibition putting people off
  – “Deep south” – “As far from South Pole as the middle of Spain or New York are from North Pole. New Zealand is nearer the UK than any part of the UK” – Invercargill
Forecasting

• Scale of forecasting
• Complaints about television weather
  – Northland – predictions of cyclones
  – West Coast – forecast of rain for entire region
  – Milford Sound/Mangonui – not included on television weather maps
• Newspapers better
  – Smaller scale
  – Some tourist specific information
RTOs (& tourism businesses)

- Very vocal in newspapers/media
- Recorded data (climate)
  - Impacts on destination image
  - Impacts on visitation
- Forecasting
  - Impacts on visitation
  - Reinforces image

Positive action
- Recording own temperatures
- Help fund new weather stations
- Help take readings

“Misleading TV weather may cost Bay millions”
Sunday Star Times, 17 Jan 1999, p.3
“New weather station puts heat on TV temperatures”
Hawke’s Bay Today, 12 May 2005, p.1

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Otago Daily Times, 22 Sep 2005
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Regional Tourism Organisations (29)

• Climate/weather content
  – 24 dedicated weather/climate pages (8 hard to find or limited info)

• Climate data
  – Averages of daily recorded data (temperature, including measure used; sunshine hours; rainfall; comparisons to other centres)

• Current weather data
  – Location on website, number of days forecast, links to weather websites

• Tourist information
  – Other weather information, links to websites
## Temperature

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Climate Data</th>
<th>Number of RTOs (29)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly average temperature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seasonal average temperature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seasonal average temperature (winter/summer only)</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average temperature (high)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average temperature (low)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Celsius &amp; Fahrenheit</td>
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Sunshine hours

- Sunny regions:
  - Tourism Bay of Plenty ("one of the sunniest places in New Zealand")
  - Destination Marlborough ("regularly claims New Zealand highest sunshine hours")

- Less sunny regions:
  - Positively Wellington & Venture Taranaki favourably compared their annual sunshine hours to other ‘selected’ destinations

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Rainfall

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<td>Monthly rainfall totals</td>
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“Yes, it does rain on the West Coast, but not as much as you might think. Other places in New Zealand are a lot wetter – they're just better at hiding it! For example, in 2004 Hokitika got 1,964 hours of sunshine and Greymouth 1,980; both a good measure ahead of Auckland's 1,825 hours”.

[www.westcoastnz.com/visit/visit-weather/](http://www.westcoastnz.com/visit/visit-weather/)

“NIWA’s figures show that on average Auckland records 190 days rain a year, a mere 15 days behind Greymouth’s 205. Hokitika has 209, Kaitaia 104 and Invercargill 220”. “Coast tries to shake off wet image” *The Press*, 8 Sept 1998, p.3
Media & RTOs

• Media reports suggest destinations (RTOs) have valid concerns regarding climate/weather information
  – Image – marketing and promotional challenges
  – Direct impacts on visitation
  – Ongoing
• RTOs vocal in media but not proactive themselves
  – Limited climate and weather information on websites
  – No clear pattern of promotion of climate assets
    • Often ‘good’ climatic features not made explicit
    • Others make most of less than favourable conditions
Implications of findings

• Climate & weather information
  – Quality & accuracy of weather data?
  – Accurate weather data necessary for long-term climate information
  – Potential to improve delivery of both climate & weather data for tourists

• RTOs
  – Poor delivery of what information is there
  – Blue skies marketing/selected truths
Future research

• What impact does climate & weather information have?
• What impact does the media have?
  – Stories
  – Forecasting
• What climate & weather information do tourists want/need to know?
References