

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



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# Outline

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

# Climate, weather & tourism

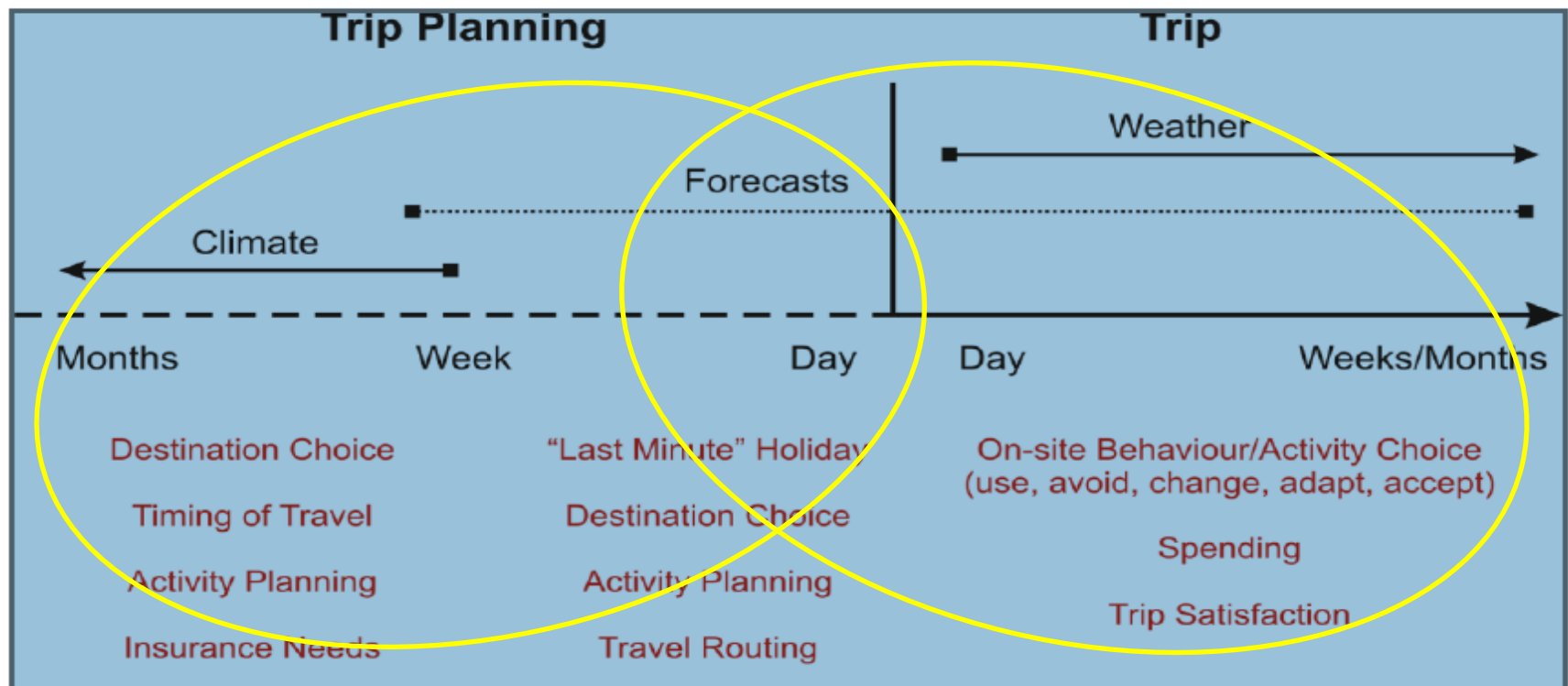
- Impacts on destination attractiveness
- Visitation
- Activity participation & satisfaction
- Safety & health risks
- Overall satisfaction

*“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, weather & 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



# ‘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/](http://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/](http://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](http://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

**“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 13 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*

**“Temperature rises over heat in the city”**

*Northern Advocate, 4 Feb 2002*

**“Tourism Coromandel takes a dig at forecasters”**

*Radio New Zealand Newswire, 20 Jan 1999*

**“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”**

*The Press, 31 Oct 2000, p.7*

**“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*



**Lincoln University**

*Te Whare Wanaka o Aoraki*  
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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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# 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

Climate Data	Number of RTOs (29)
Monthly average temperature	7
Seasonal average temperature	7
Seasonal average temperature (winter/summer only)	8
Average temperature (high)	22
Average temperature (low)	15
Celsius & Fahrenheit	6



# Sunshine hours

Climate data	Number of RTOs (29)
Annual sunshine hours	10
Monthly sunshine hours	3

- 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

# Rainfall

Climate data	Number of RTOs (29)
Annual rainfall totals	7
Seasonal rainfall totals	1
Monthly rainfall totals	3

“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

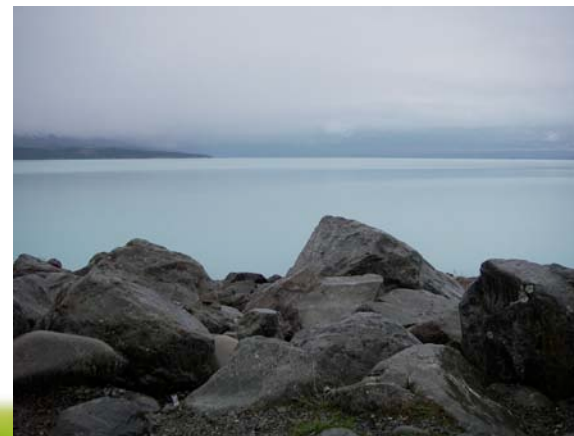
- Media reports suggest destinations (RTOs) have valid concerns regarding climate/weather information
  - Image – marketing and promotional challenges
  - Direct impacts on visitation
  - Ongoing
- RTOs vocal in media but not proactive themselves
  - Limited climate and weather information on websites
  - 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

- Becken, S., Wilson, J. & Reisinger, A. (2010) *Weather, Climate and Tourism: A New Zealand Perspective*. Land Environment and People Research (LEaP) Report No. 20, Lincoln University
- Scott, D. & Lemieux, C. (2009) *Weather and Climate Information for Tourism*. Commissioned White Paper for the World Climate Conference 3. World Meteorological Organization: Geneva and United Nations World Tourism Organization: Madrid.