

Dunes Trust Website

Project Title: Empowering coastal communities to adapt to climate change

Funding

This project is funded by the Ministry for the Environment's Sustainable Management Fund with direct and in-kind contributions from the Dunes Trust and local coast care groups, regional and district councils and the Department of Conservation. The project is managed by the Dune Restoration Trust of New Zealand and is in the second year of a 3-year project.

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Project Purpose

The aim is to provide coastal communities with an adaptive approach to help mitigate the effects of sea level rise and increased storms resulting from predicted climatic change. The emphasis is on working with communities to provide them with the skills to assess the state of their dunes and build resilient sustainable coastal communities. The focus is on restoring natural dune form and function and managing dunes systems using native plants.

Project Description

The project involves several aspects.

Free workshops are being run throughout the whole country with the aim of empowering coastal communities to better understand and manage their beaches and dunes systems, and to raise awareness of the likely effects of climatic change along their coast. It will provide practical methods that will enable local communities to maintain and restore natural dunes and dune function to better adapt to the likely effects of climatic change along their beaches.

A high quality practical Technical Coastal Management Handbook on coastal community action in response to climatic change is being written.

Work is also underway on the setting up of an interactive comprehensive reference database covering coastal management relevant to New Zealand.

Background

The predicted effects of climate change including increased sea levels and more numerous and severe coastal storms will impact significantly on coastal communities. Severe hazard problems will result from these effects of climatic change for many coastal communities if mitigation or adaptive plans are not progressively implemented. Coastal communities urgently need to develop the skills to better live with and adapt to coastal change, if existing

trends are to be reversed and these communities are to become resilient and sustainable in the face of climate change.

The Dune Restoration Trust has a network of individuals, groups and agencies in key coastal regions throughout the New Zealand. This project seeks to bring all interest groups together to regional based workshops where local issues and local solutions can be discussed regarding coastal management issues and impending impacts of climatic change to the local environment. The project focuses on natural dune form and function and restoration using native vegetation, and the role that local coast care groups and managing agencies can play in managing their coastal dunes.