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Destination transitions and resilience following trigger events and transformative moments

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ABSTRACT

Disasters and crises are increasingly seen as opportunities for transformation of the tourism system at various scales. From a resilience perspective, crises and disasters may act as trigger events for system change, sometimes described as the "disaster-reform hypothesis". An integrative framework informed by different fields is used to analyse the destination development pathways following the Kaikōura earthquake in New Zealand. In addition to policy documents and media, the study draws on semi-structured interviews with 21 business owners and managers in the Kaikōura region, an internationally recognised ecotourism destination. The findings show pathway competition, experimentation, scale effects and lock-in influencing transitions. The research identifies interactions between different actors at different levels of governance in shaping destination pathways post-disaster, with external political and economic actors having the most influence. Multiple levels of resilience chart a potentially more resilient destination. The study concludes that the range of potential destination pathways is constrained by decision-making at other scales, e.g. national policy settings and insurance coverage, that affect tourism businesses and destination decision-making. As a result, the notion of transformation should be understood as an essentially contested concept both within a destination and between destination stakeholders and those that operate at a national scale.

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1. Introduction

Despite the growing literature on the interconnectedness between tourism development and the resilience of destinations and communities (Bertella, 2022; Hall et al., 2018; Hall et al., 2023; Wakil et al., 2021), significant gaps remain. One such gap is the relationship between changes in tourism destinations post-disaster and the creation of "new"

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development paths that may be more resilient or not in the long term, but which are often justified in relation to their hypothetical resilience in the face of future change and disasters (Calgaro et al., 2014; Hall & Prayag, 2020; Prayag, 2023; Wilson, 2012). From a destination evolution perspective, the action and interaction of various stakeholders (tourism and non-tourism) as well as the set of institutional arrangements, affect the ability of a destination to adapt and establish new development paths in response to change (Brouder & Fullerton, 2015; Sanz-Ibáñez & Anton Clavé, 2014). Such relationships may eventually determine whether the destination moves to a new, more resilient, path with respect to endogenous and exogenous future shocks and trigger events.

Destination evolution post-disaster is a complex, path, and place-dependent process (Hall et al., 2018; Sanz-Ibáñez & Anton Clavé, 2014) that epitomises change dynamics at play and interaction between the different scales of political, socio-economic, environmental, cultural and tourism systems (Amore et al., 2018). As a result, the multi-layered and changing policy environment that constrains and guides tourism planning and development affects destination resilience post-disaster (Hall, 2010; Seyfi & Hall, 2020; Prayag et al., 2020). Therefore, this article focuses on the factors and impediments to resilient pathways post-disaster and their relationship to both endogenous and exogenous forces. In this way, we contribute to expand the tourism literature on how resilience is understood by actors in the planning and policy process.

Although COVID-19 has been widely positioned as a potentially transformative event (Briggs et al., 2020; Casale, 2020), but there has often been a lack of appreciation for the integral role of trigger events and their function within socio-ecological resilience theory (Cote & Nightingale, 2012; Sterk et al., 2017) and the inherent connection that this has with disasters and disaster risk management at various scales (Cavanagh, 2017; Paidakaki & Moulaert, 2017). This situation may be especially important in the tourism context given the potential for trigger events, such as disasters or crises (Ateljevic, 2020; Pung et al., 2020), to transform systems both within and between scales. This is potentially due to the ways in which tourist flows and place perceptions, and destination promotion that are stretched over space and time (Hall et al., 2018). From this perspective disasters are not aberrations, but rather they are a moment or event in destination development that reveals the relative successes or failures of making destination's resilient, particular when considered in the context of sustainable development (Seyfi & Hall, 2020). Although often terrible in their initial impact, disasters can, thus, be seen as opportunities for building and reinforcing the economic, environmental and socio-cultural fabric, upon which destination development hinges (Becken & Hughey, 2013; Hall & Prayag, 2020).

The notion of a pathway is a valuable metaphor to help simplify the complexities and dynamics of complex development, system, and policy processes. The pathway metaphor is utilised here to highlight several key points with respect to destination development processes: (a) they are part of a process occurring over time and space; (b) there are potentially multiple paths to follow, not all of which will lead to transition or transformation; (c) they convey some sense of attempts by actors to "steer" path processes, rather than their being determined by random circumstances; and (d) events may alter or influence the flow or direction that a pathway takes (see Howlett, 2019a, for an analogy to this interpretation in a public policy context). This study therefore aims at understanding destination evolution post-disaster and the interaction between

individual, organisational and destination actors in charting a potentially more resilient path by examining destination change following the trigger event of the 2016 Kaikōura earthquake in the South Island of New Zealand. A trigger event is an event with substantial impact that potentially changes the direction of destination development (Seyfi & Hall, 2020). An integrative framework of trigger events in a disaster context drawn from relevant resilience, disaster, and public policy literature is used to study destination change (i.e. pre and post trigger events) and pathways. This is followed by the method, and findings from the case and a discussion of what it illustrates with respect to transformation and trigger events. Drawing on the research findings and literature on resilience and transformation a process model and typology with which to understand trigger events and transformative moments is presented. The paper concludes with the contributions of the study, especially with respect to a typology of trigger events and the nature of transformation in a destination resilience context, its limitations and areas of future research.

2. Resilience and transformation

Within the resilience literature, disasters are frequently seen as opportunities for transformation or transition (Bousquet et al., 2016; Hall & Naderi Koupaei, 2024; Manyena et al., 2019; Parker, 2020; Pelling, 2012). Although the terms are often used interchangeably, they are not identical, and while they both represent aspects of change they often have different foci (Hölscher et al., 2018). From a systems perspective transformation tends to be used to describe the change in entire systems, e.g. a destination a whole, and transition is more related to specific sub-systems, e.g. a specific sector. There are also temporal differences in that a transition is the process and/or a period of change from one state to another [change in shape], while a transformation refers to the marked change in a state [what it is that changes] (Folke et al., 2010; Hölscher et al., 2018). A transition is, therefore, a pathway to a transformation (Gössling et al., 2012), although not all pathways necessarily lead to a transformation or represent a transition (Amirzadeh et al., 2022; Kenis et al., 2016; Sareen & Waagsaether, 2023).

2.1. Transformation

Transformation is often framed within a discourse of disaster risk reduction, adaptive capacity, community vulnerability and resilience, and stakeholder coping responses (Cutter et al., 2008; Mochizuki et al., 2018). Transformation and transition are increasingly portrayed as an urgent necessity because of the emergence of global risks, such as pandemics and environmental change, which can potentially be mitigated and adapted to (Hölscher et al., 2018). For example, transformation is regarded as a vital response to climate change. Defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2012, p. 564) as "The altering of fundamental attributes of a system (including value systems; regulatory, legislative, or bureaucratic regimes; financial institutions; and technological or biological systems)." However, while transformative change may be desirable, what that actually means may differ according to the normative framework that is applied, e.g. a focus on economic growth against greater emphasis on social, cultural and environmental wellbeing. Therefore, the potential for transformation is not only

connected to pre-existing development pathways prior to trigger events, as well as the nature of the trigger event itself, but also to the competing visions of what post event pathways should look like and how it should be achieved. The notion of transformation is, therefore, an essentially contested concept (Gallie, 1955), in which there will be winning and losing community, organisational and individual actors depending on the pathway taken (Lukes, 2004) and with the interpretation of transformation depending on the values of actors and their understanding of resilience (Amore et al., 2017). The more interrelated and interdependent these actors are, the more complex, difficult to predict, and harder to manage the system becomes (Grewatsch et al., 2023; Meadows, 2008).

2.2. Trigger events

Trigger events are crises, disasters, or deliberative decisions, e.g. introduction of a substantive new policy, that affect development pathways at different scales, e.g. global, national and regional (Figure 1) (Wilson, 2012; Young, 2010). However, post event pathways are not necessarily transitions. Regardless of the scale, development pathways are the result of the interaction between individual and organisational actors and institutional arrangements. Whether an event is endogenous or exogenous depends on the scale of analysis, represented in Figure 1 by the bottom-up or top-down nature of the event. From a regional or destination perspective trigger events can be described as being either endogenous, i.e. an earthquake, or exogenous, i.e. a global economic and financial crisis or business and policy decisions made externally to the destination. For example, an airline decision to remove an air route or cruise line decisions to travel to

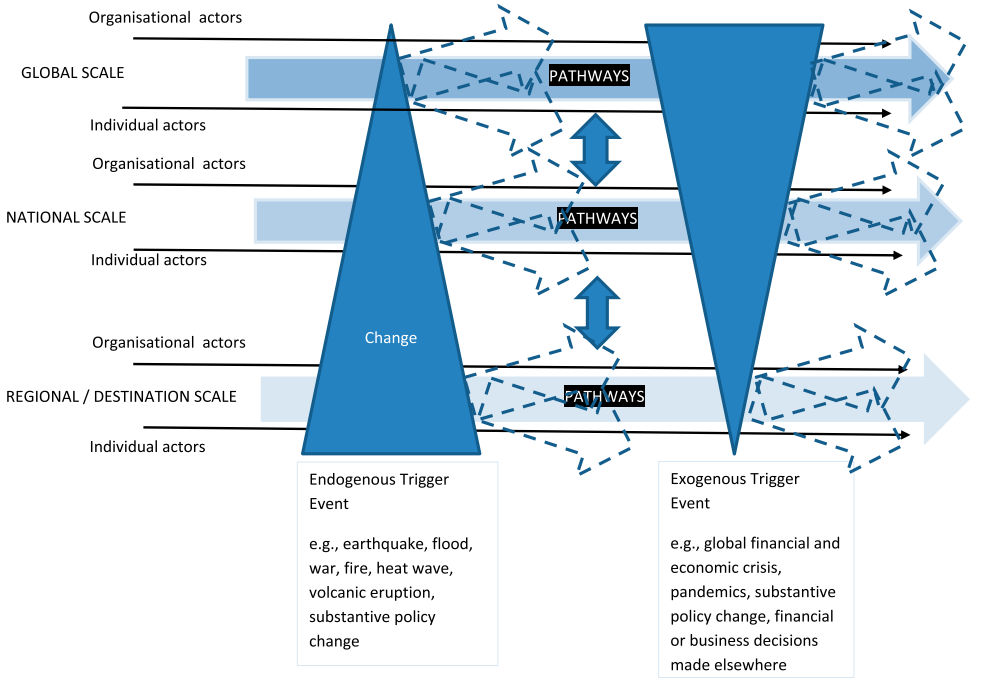

Figure 1. Trigger events and development pathways.

a different port are likely trigger events at a destination scale. Arguably, a disaster such as an earthquake has both endogenous and exogenous components, as while the transition even occurs in place, response to the event at national or other scales, such as central government or insurance company decisions can have extremely significant effects on destination recovery pathways (Hall et al., 2016).

2.3. Destination development pathways

Although there is interplay between the different scales, the primary effect of an event is experienced at the regional or destination scale given that crises and disasters are actually experienced by people and communities locally. Development pathways can be understood as occurring at different scales but the one that is most germane to communities, especially in a tourism context, is at a destination level (Figure 1). However, each event provides an opportunity to take different pathways. Yet, why, when a range of potential pathways exist are particular trajectories taken and not others? Especially given their potential effect on destination, community, organisational and individual resilience (Hall et al., 2018; Traskevich & Fontanari, 2023). Such issues are critical given concerns over tourism development pathways and the opportunities that crisis provide for system change (Ateljevic, 2020; Hall & Prayag, 2020). Nevertheless, system transformations are not automatic despite how "rational" they may appear (Hall et al., 2023). Instead, Hölscher et al. (2018) argue that they are the result of the agency and interplay between community, organisational and individual actors that operate at different scales. Indeed, it has long been recognised that unless there is fundamental policy learning, a crisis may reinforce more of the same pathway rather than resulting in fundamental change (Hall, 2011). Therefore, understanding the role of actors within transformation processes would appear to be essential to identifying post-disaster pathways (Amore et al., 2017; Saja et al., 2021).

In terms of identifying actual transformation, Gibson et al. (2016) offer five indicators of transformation in a disaster management context: intense interaction between destination actors at different scales, e.g. individuals, businesses, communities, destination organisations; the intervention of external actors, e.g. central government agencies; system level change, including destination goals and governance; new organisational, community, personal and governance behaviour beyond previous strategies; and new institutional behaviour beyond previous strategies and, in some cases the development of new institutional arrangements. However, as stressed above, whether a post-disaster pathway is actually transformative or not depends on the normative assumptions of the actors involved. These issues will now be examined in the context of the case study of the Kaikōura earthquake.

3. Research context

On 14 November 2016, a magnitude (M_w) 7.8 earthquake struck the small coastal town of Kaikōura in the South Island of New Zealand, causing damages estimated at NZ$900 million (MBIE, 2017). With an economy relying mainly on agriculture, fishing and tourism, the small town faced significant logistical, economic and social challenges caused by extensive damage to critical infrastructure and housing (Cradock-Henry

et al., 2018). With almost 34.1% of jobs dependent on the tourism sector (MBIE, 2017), domestic and international tourism expenditure fell by 20% (Stevenson et al., 2017). Road and rail access was cut due to surface faulting, landslides, and damages to bridges. Communications, electricity, water and sewerage infrastructure were severely damaged for weeks (Stevenson et al., 2017).

In response to this earthquake and others, such as the 2010–2011 Canterbury earthquakes, there is widespread interest among policy makers and practitioners in enhancing resilience, reducing vulnerability, and encouraging greater adaptability at all societal levels (Basher, 2016), with the New Zealand experience long being influential in the Nordic context (e.g. Große et al., 2021; McConnell & Drennan, 2006). The goal of a "resilient New Zealand" has driven government policy for almost two decades beginning with the 2002 *Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act* (Cradock-Henry et al., 2018). However, recent disasters such as the Kaikōura earthquake and the COVID-19 pandemic continue to highlight the vulnerability of tourism assets, activities, and dependent communities, raising the question as to whether destinations, such as Kaikōura, take a resilient and transformative path post-disaster or not (Fang et al., 2020).

4. Method

Adopting a case study method (Yin, 2009), several qualitative methods were employed to collect data for this study. First, policy documents from local, regional, and national government, and media articles were analysed to understand the different development pathways that were considered for Kaikōura, and whether these provide evidence of transitions and resilience building. Second, researcher participant observation was employed through one of the researchers attending the "Kaikōura Challenge" in May 2016, which was a community post-disaster workshop sponsored by the University of Canterbury and New Zealand Transport Agency to understand the emergent issues post-disaster as well to observe community reactions to proposed recovery strategies for small businesses, including tourism businesses. The researcher who attended the workshop can be considered an outsider in her positionality, while also being female and Asian, compared to most of participants that were New Zealanders Māori and Pakeha. During the workshop, the researcher observed the process and the feedback that stakeholders gave on recovery strategies presented. However, based on self-awareness and self-evaluation which are part and parcel of reflexivity (Crossley, 2019), we acknowledge that the presence of one of the researchers at the workshop, where interactions with participants are unavoidable, would lead to idea sharing and prioritisation that may give voice to larger rather than smaller players in the tourism industry. Also, those that are more socially embedded in the local community would be more open to interact with others and share ideas. The researcher had the opportunity to informally talk to attendees to establish a network of participants for the next stage of the study. Third, using a purposive sampling approach, 21 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with local business owners to understand their view of the proposed tourism recovery strategies but also their own individual and business resilience in September/October 2017. These individuals represented 17 small tourism organisations in Kaikoura and included mostly accommodation providers (11) and other tourism businesses (6) such as tour operators. Of the 21 interviews, four were paired (e.g, business owner and children; owner and general

manager), 11 and 10 were with male and female participants respectively. Their ages ranged from 25 to over 55 years old. Seventeen participants were business owners, and three others were general managers. The researcher used her experience gained at the workshop to quickly build rapport at the start of the interview and gain deeper insights on resilience and recovery strategies, which acknowledges the influences of her presence on participants, including in the way the data were gathered, as well as the questions asked and probed during the interview. These reflexive acts (Crossley, 2019) are also, complemented by observations of the other researchers in travelling in the affected area prior and subsequent to the trigger event and informal interactions with industry and stakeholders, that also allow informed reflexion on the collected data.

These three approaches provided insights into the constraints and affordances of the dominant or most available construction of recovery (Cox & Perry, 2011) and the opportunity to consider other emergent constructions and possibilities identified from the in-depth interviews. The project secured ethics approval from the researchers' university, and adopting a purposive sampling strategy, individual tourism business owners were identified at community group meetings and approached for interviews. The main focus of such sampling was to insure as broad a range of experiences and subjectivities as possible based on their potential to inform the phenomenon of interest (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The interview protocol included questions around individual resilience (e.g. Can you tell me about the challenges you are facing due to the earthquake and how you are dealing with them?), business resilience (e.g. Can you give me some examples of when and how you think your business showed resilience?), and government and community interventions post-disaster (e.g. what support did you receive from local and central government?). These questions were derived from previous disaster recovery and resilience research (e.g. Cox & Perry, 2011). Data saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used as the basis for determining when to end data collection and this occurred after 21 interviews. All interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Data analysis was conducted in two stages. In stage 1, a total of 87 documents from November 2016 to January 2019 (including media articles and government reports) were analysed. The media articles were sourced from Stuff, which is the leading digital news website in New Zealand, reaching over 3.4 million New Zealanders (www.stuff.co.nz). We searched media articles using the key words "kaikoura earthquake" and "tourism" and/or "recovery" and this generated 2410 hits. The MBIE website was used to identify government reports on the Kaikōura earthquake and the recovery plan. We sifted through both and selected only 87 that covered specifically action plans, policy, and recovery. The analysis involved multiple readings of the documents and a process of deconstructing and interpreting the meanings embedded in the text (Cox & Perry, 2011). The concepts associated with development pathways, discussed above, were "held lightly" by researchers during their analysis to identify the emergence of key points in the recovery process. In stage 2, both the interview and observational data (field notes) were initially analysed to derive codes (drivers, structure, actors, interaction and transformation), involving constant-comparative methods (Charmaz, 2000). The transcripts and field notes were subjected to multiple readings and detailed coding to identify categories that would give credence to actors, structures, agency, and resilience/transformative outcomes embedded in illustrative figures of the post-trigger event pathways (see below). The analytic process was based on immersion in the data, repeated sorting,

coding, and comparisons that began with line-by-line coding (Charmaz, 2000; Cox & Perry, 2011). This then moved to selective coding to collapse those initial codes into more meaningful categories but also searching for differences within categories. Finally, the themes from stages 1 and 2 were triangulated to arrive at the final themes as part of a data triangulation process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

5. Findings and discussion

The document analysis revealed four themes: (1) pathway competition, (2) pathway experimentation, (3) pathway scale effects; and (4) pathway lock-in, with each connected to endogenous and exogenous change and transformation planning. These in essence determine the trajectory of recovery and whether the destination transitions to a new state and transforms in a way that builds and sustains resilience. From a socio-ecological resilience approach (Folke et al., 2010), resilience is "the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganise while undergoing change so as to retain essentially the same function, structure, identity and feedbacks" (Walker et al., 2004, p. 6) that existed prior to disturbance. Resilience is therefore a property of the relative stability of a system as a result of the persistence of relationships within that system (Folke et al., 2010). In contrast, engineering resilience ("bounce back") reflects the speed at which a system can return to equilibrium (Walker et al., 2004) and focuses on attributes of efficiency, constancy and predictability (system maintenance). However, socio-ecological resilience focuses on persistence, change and unpredictability in complex systems. From a socio-ecological resilience perspective, transformation provides for fundamental shifts in tourism development trajectories (Hall et al., 2018; 2023).

Importantly, the notion of resilience that actors, e.g. government and tourism agencies, adopt in policy and decision-making is not just an academic matter. As will be discussed below in relation to the findings, how resilience and development pathways are conceived, defined and measured in policy, planning and decision-making terms influences the direction of tourism development and the capacity to think and adopt "other" policy options (Hall, 2011; Nohrstedt, 2022; Wilson, 2012). Therefore, drawing on the research findings that reflect development pathways and resilient outcomes as occurring as the result of institutional arrangements, actor interaction, system inertia, and competing sets of values (see also Crow et al., 2021; Hall & Jenkins, 1995; Lukes, 2004; Nohrstedt, 2022; Simmons et al., 1974) an outline of the key elements can therefore be provided (Figure 2). Further commentary on the framework will be returned to below following discussion of the findings with respect to pathway direction.

5.1. Pathway competition

It was evident that community and government pathways for recovery were not always aligned and reflect different endogenous and exogenous notions of transformation planning and the multi-scaled nature of institutional pressures. The local business association felt that the government and local authorities were putting too much emphasis on external investors post-recovery rather than developing and supporting local investors. "The Kaikōura Business Association appealed for the council to do more to create a business-friendly environment, along with strategies for supporting local businesses,

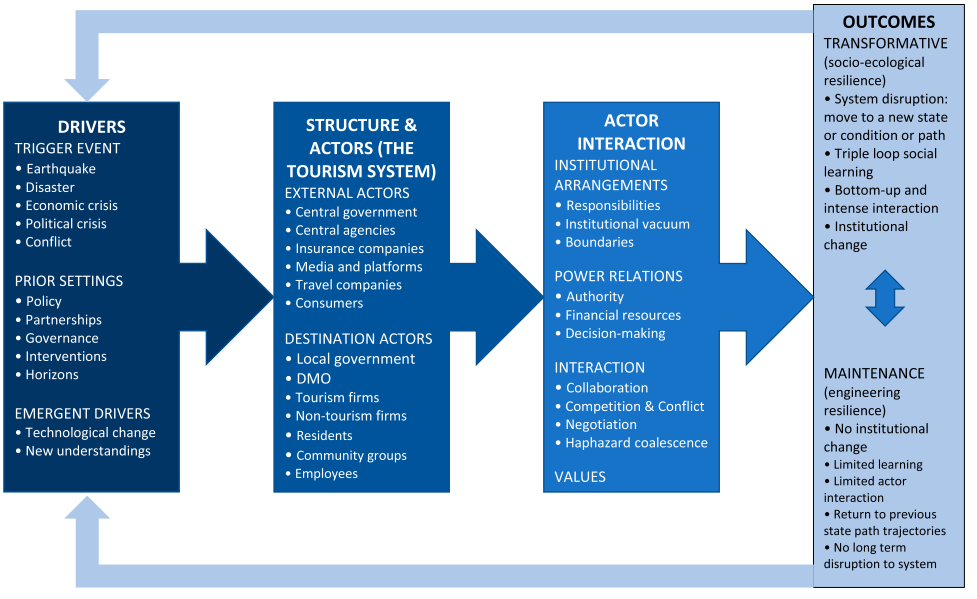

Figure 2. A resilience and transformation framework for destination development post trigger event.

initiatives and local economy rather than just for potential external investors" (Dangerfield, 2019). Yet, there was a recognition that pathways available were limited given that "Kaikōura, like all regions, faces a variety of economic development challenges including a small population, relative geographic isolation and current economic make-up that focuses on tourism and summer months trading" (Dangerfield, 2019). In essence, these factors reflect the prior settings that frame the local recovery options following the trigger event of the earthquake.

It was also evident that potential development pathways competed in terms of resource access and priorities. Trade-offs were already made when the government put together the economic support package for Kaikōura. For example, the Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB) felt that "the government's funding package did not go far enough in providing psycho-social recovery supports for the Kaikōura region" (Broughton, 2017). It was argued that the experience of the CDHB with the Canterbury Earthquakes and its disaster outcomes as well as the downstream costs in the long-term should have had more weight in funding allocation (Broughton, 2017). Thus, the prioritisation of psycho-social recovery and wellbeing of communities, according to some, could have been a pathway chosen based on the learnings from the Canterbury earthquakes (Simmons et al., 2017). However, central government funding did not match the expected support for the wellbeing for the destination community.

Nonetheless, pathway competition does not necessarily lead to long-term sub-optimal outcomes, including resilience, for the tourism industry or community. It can provide windows of opportunities for transformation by providing the impetus for reflection, revaluation, and acting as a catalyst for innovation and creativity (Folke et al., 2010). As an example, following the earthquake, there was a growing need to re-evaluate and reconsider local food security. To realise the transformation towards a more resilient food network in the region, which benefits both the local community and the tourism industry,

two critical developments were undertaken. First, through established networks and knowledge sharing, local capacity building was undertaken to boost food security. Second, existing institutional and governance arrangements were reviewed at multiple scales to identify factors that inhibited local food distribution and access (Cradock-Henry et al., 2018). In this way, an emergent transformation towards greater levels of local self-organisation occurred in which local opportunities and connectivity is enhanced between the district's individuals, businesses, and communities (Cradock-Henry et al., 2018). As noted in one media article,

> the council was currently working on an economic development framework that would help the region meet future challenges, lift overall productivity and build economic diversity. Recent measures included providing an externally funded grant to the local business association to support its set up, and significantly increasing cruise ship fees to help ensure tourists contribute to the costs to infrastructure (Dangerfield, 2019).

Thus, a balance between an outward and inward focus in recovery strategies were deemed necessary to improve resilience at all levels.

The in-depth interviews highlighted that business actors were mostly optimistic around the opportunities that emerged following the earthquake. As participant one mentioned,

> There's always another side to the earthquake, I think Kaikōura has got a lot more attention. You know, if you mention the place Kaikōura before the earthquake, not many people know. But, if you mention it now, because of the media exposure, everybody knows. It actually helped Kaikōura in some kind of way. Advertising, you know, if you mention the word, Kaikōura, people actually feel sorry for you. And then, they want to come support you … in a way.

This suggests that media exposure, whether good or bad, following a disaster can raise awareness of the destination, motivating destination actors to identify leverage points for business recovery. Also, as participant two mentioned, "We do have a core business, you know, and this remains the same. And, we'll just have to adapt to the people [construction workers]. You know, the people that are coming through." These quotes reflect how tourism business actors show adaptability to the situation and switch to different markets where they exist, as well as consider long-term opportunities.

5.2. Pathway experimentation

Experimentation that leads to innovation remains a key facet of individual, community, and business resilience post-disaster (Biggs et al., 2012; Dahles & Susilowati, 2015). "The earthquake altered landscape" became a tourist attraction but quickly it was recognised that this would appeal only to a niche market (Lewis, 2017). A successful tourism recovery effort hinges on so called restoring "existing" assets and developing new infrastructure, rather than focusing efforts on developing new tourism sectors. Ineson (2016) mentions short-term experimentation with gift vouchers to sustain tourism recovery available from tourism businesses in Kaikōura but linked to a website that showed "the status of each business and up to date information on business operations". These initiatives reflect short-term attempts by tourism operators to ensure business survival, with a focus on operations, rather than a strategic response of pathway experimentation to identify

alternative development paths. However, the ability to self-organise and re-evaluate the fit of existing governance structures within the tourism industry as a way to progress recovery plans was evident. A new structure among tourism businesses emerged as "a new business group was set up in the wake of the earthquake to share information and foster a positive business environment in the town" (Lewis, 2016). Agency amongst local actors is, thus, displayed. This signals a potential shift in the social contract which may redirect the development pathway (Gibson et al., 2016).

Tourism stakeholders spent time to reassess the destination, its markets, and tourism offerings, while also spending time strengthening local and regional networks and collaborations (Cradock-Henry et al., 2019). Small tourism businesses saw the changes brought by the earthquake in terms of opportunities for new learning or diversification (Cradock-Henry et al., 2019). As mentioned by participant 11, "the goal probably [business] has changed a little bit, because we now realise that we have to source our customers from a different market like, Chinese nationals. So, the goal was to try and get them developed." Another emergent driver was the use of social media by tourism businesses to connect with customers. While this was not unanimously adopted, as shown in the following quote from participant eight, it was nevertheless clear that the disaster was forcing destination actors (tourism businesses) to undertake a fundamental changed to marketing practices for recovery.

> Some of the business owners are very much … all doom and gloom and everything's gone wrong, and they think it's a disaster … whereas others are taking it and they are like, you know, going to all these trainings and stuff, and they are really embracing it. And people that have never used Facebook and stuff now got Facebook pages, and you know they're really trying and they had the eyes opened to.

Although the central government response to the Canterbury earthquakes limited involvement of the community and local government actors in the disaster recovery planning (Gibson et al., 2016), the need for critical reflection and consideration of a range of alternatives, allowing time for diverse regional and national actors to engage with the change process were evident in the Kaikōura disaster response. This is perhaps indicative of prior learning from previous disasters affecting the response. However, it is important to note that governance structures were the same after the earthquake as before, no specific legislation or authority was established as in the case of Christchurch five years previously, even though the same political party was in government. This meant that the local and regional councils remained under existing national legislation and the regulatory power and financial resources of central government predominated in the post disaster period.

As a result, for pathway experimentation to happen, financial support from central government was necessary but as indicated in the following quote from a participant, access to funds was not always easy:

> the government has encouraged every single business to apply for the grant, there's some type of fund that they can help with the business. But, you have to apply for it, and you have to provide your … all the financial forecasts. It's quite difficult to get the fund, but there is some kind of help.

Another participant (one), however, was very pleased with central government support, "at the moment, the government has been quite helpful, they've got a team of people

that actually come and visit each business, and so … providing advice and ideas." Thus, the power relations in terms of who has authority, financial resources and decision-making ability post-disaster is significant on pathway planning. Indeed, central government priorities with respect to restoring rail and road linkages were a national priority with local impact. For small population centres affected by disasters it is apparent that central government support and leadership, drives the general direction of many of the recovery pathways, with local leadership being limited to specific sub-systems with sufficient key local actors, such as food networks. Importantly, the differences between local and other governmental actors may not only reflect differentials in economic and political power, but also highlight different values with respect to where post-disaster development emphasis should lie, with central government being much more focused on infrastructure restoration than any form of transformation.

5.3. Pathway scale effects

Local stakeholders tend to carry the weight and costs of any pathway (Gibson et al., 2016). This is because they tend to better understand the critical vulnerabilities of the community and the industry sectors that underpin local development pathways. In the Kaikōura case, it was clear that vulnerabilities at different scales at times impeded some potential development pathways. For example, the spatial characteristics of the community was a significant vulnerability impeding resilience building as these were related to road access, transportation, and logistics (Cradock-Henry et al., 2019), which are primarily central and regional government responsibilities. Given that the basic infrastructure was severely damaged, the options available for restarting tourism were constrained (Fountain & Cradock-Henry, 2020). As participant two mentioned, the recovery effort to re-establish basic infrastructure was taking longer than expected, affecting their own business recovery, "just because the recovery is taking, you know, so long. And, there's still so much more to go. And, until we get access, reliable access, that just didn't occur."

Impediments to effective and efficient communication between community members in relation to their engagement with local and central government regarding local needs and recovery priorities were also evident. The reduced telecommunications infrastructure (limited mobile reception and access to broadband Internet) as well as the capacity constraints of a small community dealing with a major disaster severely reduced the effectiveness of the community response (Cradock-Henry et al., 2019). Participant seven mentioned,

> it's been challenging, and a lot of the information that we received from the people that were doing the job, the people who were trying to establishing connection of Kaikoura to the rest of the world have all been … rather misleading … in certain ways.

While the recovery framework for Kaikōura required governance and management systems that support recovery (Simmons et al., 2017), without community and government actors being able to communicate with each other, misunderstandings and differences may emerge. Participant twelve observed,

> The local district council has been disappointing. Because, I think they just didn't have the right skills and the structure to deal with the event, compared to the Christchurch City Council, they've been very poor, but, I know that they are a much smaller organisation.

This quote reflects not only scale effects but also institutional arrangements not necessarily equipped to respond to disasters.

However, while there may be competition and conflict between business and government actors in the tourism recovery process, it was also clear that collaboration between different actors were evident in some areas. As participant eleven noted, they ensured that their overseas-based suppliers were kept informed throughout the recovery process,

> the direct suppliers are our tour operators that send us clients. So, you know, it's been ongoing dialogue with them, letting them know … keeping them informed. Trying to keep them informed as much as possible about what's going on, you know.

Participant four commented that following the initial chaos, "since then, people have got together, businesses have worked together, that we all have goals of what we want for this town. And, so that's what has happened." This highlights a willingness of different actors at the same scale (community/destination) to work collaboratively with each other to achieve disaster recovery outcomes. However, cross-scale collaborative activities appear harder to achieve because of differences in goals, values and power.

5.4. Pathway lock-in

Not all affected communities agreed with respect to how much support they received from government actors. Given the magnitude of the earthquakes' impacts, one media report suggested that "communities hit hardest by the earthquake feel forgotten by the Crown" (Meier, 2017). This report focuses on the plight of residents in the Hurunui district, who were unable to access government funding after the earthquake, given that funding was prioritised for residents and businesses in Kaikōura, illustrating that the distribution of assistance is spatially uneven Kaikōura businesses received NZ$7.5 million in relief packages (Fairfax, 2016), but also benefitted from tax reliefs and emergency legislation similar to that passed following the Canterbury Earthquakes. In contrast, surrounding districts such as Hurunui and Hanmer Springs received only NZ$350,000 in tourism relief package (Dangerfield, 2017). Thus, not all regions affected had equal access to and opportunities for receiving national government funding, potentially limiting local recovery pathways. Furthermore, no transparent policy rationale is provided for such differences, with those affected having little or no means to influence central policy decision-making.

Simmons (2017) highlights the need to "reflect in the integration of tourism destination plans with civil defence and emergency management plans and procedures, and again lessons to be learnt", and criticises the ad-hoc nature of recovery strategies that primarily focused on re-establishing travel routes, building new itineraries for communication, and modelling tourist return to support community recovery and described it as "a belts and braces approach" (Simmons, 2017). The national government response is also criticised for "botch-ups" and "money wasted" (van Beynen, 2016), pinpointing to the lack of attention paid by recovery authorities to the lessons learnt from the Canterbury earthquakes and government actors "stubbornly adhering to procedures, policies and people that don't work" hampering tourism recovery. In the same article "choosing the right priorities" were emphasised and given the importance of tourism for the community "reconstruction workers" needed to be accommodated separately from using up

"tourist accommodation". In essence, this approach was perceived as creating issues for recovery using domestic tourism as a lever (Dangerfield, 2019). These issues indicate to some extent that actor interactions can be counter-productive leading to conflict and lack of collaboration.

Residents were not always supportive of tourism being prioritised as the pathway for recovery. As one article points out, "the Kaikōura District Council [need] to plan more strategically for the future, tourism can be a good thing but … it shouldn't be our only focus" (Dangerfield, 2019). This signals that the potential for pathway lock-in early in the recovery process through prioritisation of tourism as the dominant development pathway post-disaster was evident. The Kaikōura recovery plan placed much emphasis on re-establishing travel routes and infrastructure to kick-start the tourism industry as one of the main priorities (Simmons et al., 2017), yet several years later, residents are questioning the focus on tourism as the development pathway. This is indicative of the haphazard coalescence of actor interactions post-disaster and a reflection of different understandings of destination resilience by different actors (Hall et al., 2018), with government actors focused on "bouncing back" (engineering resilience) and community actors having more of a transformative focus, but not having the power or resources to achieve it.

5.5. Post-trigger event destination resilience and transformation policy process

There is a relatively limited, though growing, body of empirical research on transformative events in relation to development pathways and resilience (Matyas & Pelling, 2015; Nohrstedt, 2022; Pelling, 2012; Schipper et al., 2020), what Nohrstedt et al. (2021) describe as the "disaster-reform hypothesis". Therefore, drawing upon the findings of the case study and policy-flow analysis (Simmons et al. 1974; see Howlett, 2019a, 2019b, for recent policy applications) we developed a framework that recognises both the significance of structure at multiple scales as well as the agency of individual and organisational actors. The policy flow analysis approach understands policy change and implementation as occurring over time within networks of interaction processes within a defined policy system and set of formal and informal institutional arrangements. From this perspective pre and post disaster event policy choices, i.e. decisions to follow particular development pathways are a reflection of the value choices of the actors and interests involved, the power relations between them, and their mediation via institutional structures. As Hölscher et al. (2018, p. 2) observed, "Actors play key roles in shaping desirable transitions and transformations through transformative agency and governance. Processes to shape transitions and transformations are deeply political, involving power struggles and value conflicts."

In destination development, the interactions between organisational and individual actors are affected by structure and institutional arrangements as well as the power relations between them (Figure 2). The drivers of the pathways that are the outcome of the process include trigger events, the settings that exist prior to the event in terms of policies, partnerships, governance and intervention selection, as well as the influence of emergent drivers. Figure 2 also strongly reflects both the policy process and disaster recovery literature in that policy implementation and the recovery stage presage the next stage of policy development (Howlett, 2019a) and the relative preparedness for

the next crisis (Asghar et al., 2006; Nohrstedt et al., 2021). It is important to recognise therefore, that despite the arguments for the transformative nature of events (Nohrstedt, 2022), from a policy process perspective the "outcome" of post-disaster pathways may not be transformative (socio-ecological resilience) at all and, instead, revert to system maintenance (engineering resilience approach) as a result of pathway lock-in and scale effects, which reduce the capacity for pathway experimentation. Thus, destinations can bounce back to old ways of doing things that may be driven by a growth mind-set that supersedes community aspirations post-disaster.

We are, of course, mindful of the capacity to generalise from a single case. Each destination has its own tourism system with its specific set of actors, interests, values, and institutional arrangements within which endogenous change occurs but, from a destination perspective, the policy and recovery process is exogenously affected by what occurs at the national and global scale, with each scale having its own set of actors (Hall et al., 2018, 2023). Actor interaction is marked by organisational, community and individual actors who hold particular sets of power, values and interests relative to policy and decision-making processes (Cretney, 2014, 2017; Grove, 2014). Drawing on this and other studies of post trigger event pathways (e.g. Gotham & Greenberg, 2014; Hall et al., 2016), a typology is provided in Figure 3, that arise out of the interaction between the degree of transformation and planning and the location of agency for regime change. Post trigger event pathways may therefore maintain the status quo, i.e. the system stays essentially unchanged despite disturbance, or system traps lead to a new state that is less optimal than pre-trigger event (Meadows, 2008). Both states illustrate a lack of transformation that prevents a destination to move to a new and desirable state, as evidenced by the considerable disaster policy and resilience literature (Gotham, 2008; Gotham & Greenberg, 2014; Hall et al., 2016; Hall & Prayag, 2020; Nohrstedt et al., 2021; Pelling, 2011; Pelling & Dill, 2010; Solnit, 2009). The normative framing of the resilience of the post disaster state being dependent on the values of the actors who perceive the state as transformative or not as well as the notion of resilience used (Hall et al., 2018).

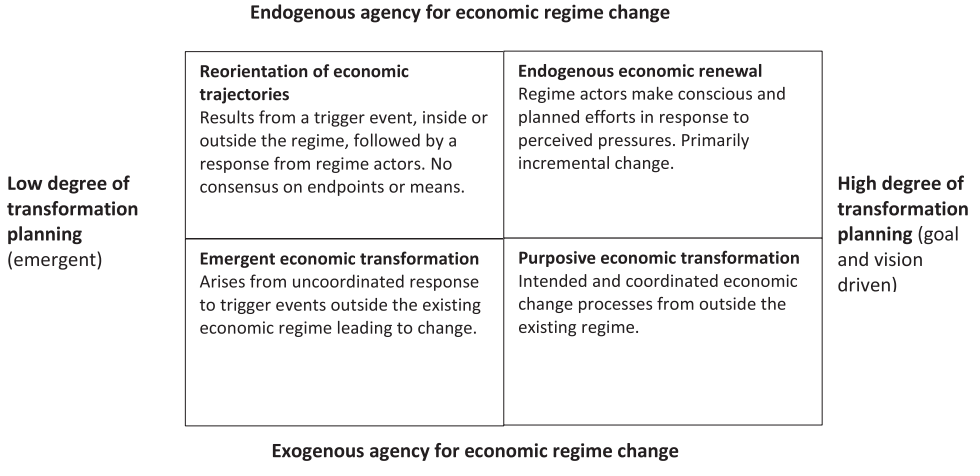

Figure 3. A typology of trigger events and transformative moments.

6. Conclusions

This study proposed a framework for understanding transitions and transformations, or lack thereof, following a trigger event. Based on the Kaikōura earthquake, the framework is evaluated using several qualitative methods. The findings suggest that the core characteristics of post-disaster development pathways can be identified, including pathway competition, pathway experimentation, pathway scale effects and pathway lock-in (Gibson et al., 2016), from the Kaikōura case study. However, In terms of outcomes, the evidence uncovered from media articles, government reports and in-depth interviews suggest that after a limited period of pathway experimentation, limited learning, and limited and/or haphazard actor interaction, resulted in pathway lock-in that reflected a strong desire from regional and central government actors to return to previous path trajectories and no long term disruption to the system. Thus, a focus on engineering resilience as an outcome was more evident than SES. However, this was also how post-disaster pathways were primarily framed and understood by key actors from outside the destination, rather than local actors, many of whom favoured pathway experimentation.

Alhough elements of self-learning, business adaptation, and self-organisation were evident, hinting to a possible transformative outcome of SES, these were not as prevalent as what have been suggested in earlier studies (Cradock-Henry et al., 2018, 2019). In the months after the earthquake, an array of new learning networks, relationships, and collaborations were advanced, enabling the community to self-organise and adapt by maintaining a heightened sensitivity to social and ecological interdependence brought on by the earthquake (Cradock-Henry et al., 2019). While there seemed to be a strong desire to move to a new state and look for alternative development trajectories by local actors early on post-disaster, over time tourism re-emerged as the dominant economic development pathway, a path that was strongly in place pre-disaster, with no appreciable change in its focus post disaster or improvements in resilience. Thus, reflecting the difficulties with the "disaster-reform hypothesis" (Nohrstedt et al., 2021), which was also applied to COVID-19. Instead, the Kaikōura post-recovery process can be regarded primarily in terms of the pathway scale effects at the interface between endogenous economic renewal and purposive economic transformation arising from central government. However, economic transformation was interpreted by central government purely in terms of an engineering resilience perspective of building back the lost infrastructure better, and not in SES terms of a fundamental transformation. Indeed, it may well be an interpretation that central government find it easier to operate in this way as it potentially reduces the risks of conflict with local actors, although it does mean that the extent of the financial resources that national governments use in disaster-recovery and their dominance in spatial decision-making may lead to restrictions in pathway experimentation because of inherently conservative pathway selection and reinforcement that reflects the pre trigger event status quo pathway (Hall et al., 2023; Nohrstedt, 2022). If Figure 3 is imagined over time it therefore means that as the post recovery period unfolds the locus of development pathways and any possible transformation has moved from being endogenously oriented and incremental to one that is exogenous and dominated by national government economic and infrastructure decision-making, and then moves back again.

While the shift towards centralised and de-bureaucratised decision making for the Canterbury earthquakes, represented a short-term institutional transformation post-quake (Hall et al., 2016), the governance structure and institutional arrangements for Kaikōura (divided between local and regional councils under the overall authority of central government), were the same pre- and post-quake, although the relative power of central government was even stronger because of their greater financial capacity. This is not surprising given that institutional structures are resistant to organisational transformation. Transformation is most likely when multiple local and external actors are aligned, in critique of established system elements (Gibson et al., 2016). While there seemed to be an initial desire to not repeat earlier disaster experience, the lack of specific legislation, organisational structures and social development interventions, and the dominance of central government funding, agencies, power and values, institutionalised pre-existing pathways producing a one-dimensional development trajectory post-earthquake (Gibson et al., 2016), where transport infrastructure became the dominant discourse for tourism recovery. In this way, maintenance of existing trajectories in Kaikoura and elsewhere reflects the dominance of engineering conceptualisations of resilience by lead actors in the policy process and pathway selection. As suggested, how resilience is conceptualised is therefore fundamental to how it is operationalised in policy making and planning terms and the trajectories of development pathways in tourism destinations,

This study is not without limitations giving rise to areas of future research. Evidence provided on the applicability of the framework is based on one trigger event only. It would be worthwhile for future studies to evaluate how several consecutive trigger events (e.g. disaster, climate and environmental change, war, economic shocks, policy change, business decisions, and pandemics) affect the structure and actors within the tourism system and their interactions, as well as the destination pathways chosen. Second, the case study is based on a small rural community, where actor relationships can be informal and thus actor interactions are less dependent on institutional arrangements. It would be worthwhile to assess the framework in a more mature tourist destination, where structures and relationships are formalised.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Ethics

Ethics clearance for this study was provided by the Human Ethics Committee at the University of Canterbury.

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