

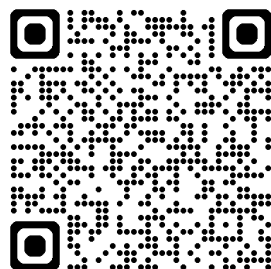
Cyclone Gabrielle 2023's transformative effects in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Abstract

In February 2023, Cyclone Gabrielle tracked slowly across the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand entraining much more-than-wet materialities. It mobilized logs and forest waste or 'slash', with eroded material. It transformed rivers into debris-laden torrents that shunted bridges and other infrastructure aside and devastated a long-term river restoration project. Debris and silt was then discharged into the sea, only to be tossed back by the Pacific Ocean onto East Coast Beaches. But Gabrielle did more work than this: it reverberated through New Zealand business, communities, science and government, forcibly entangling them in overdue dialogue, including scientific reports and a Ministerial Inquiry. This talk asks whether, as blue space becomes more dynamic, is it assembling societal transformation? It explores recent efforts in New Zealand to come to terms with new climate realities. Did the storm bring scientists into agreement on climate change action priorities, or governments, communities and businesses into action as better land managers? It finds that Cyclone Gabrielle's more-than-wet materialities had rebound effects upon climate change mitigation policies.

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SEMINAR



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