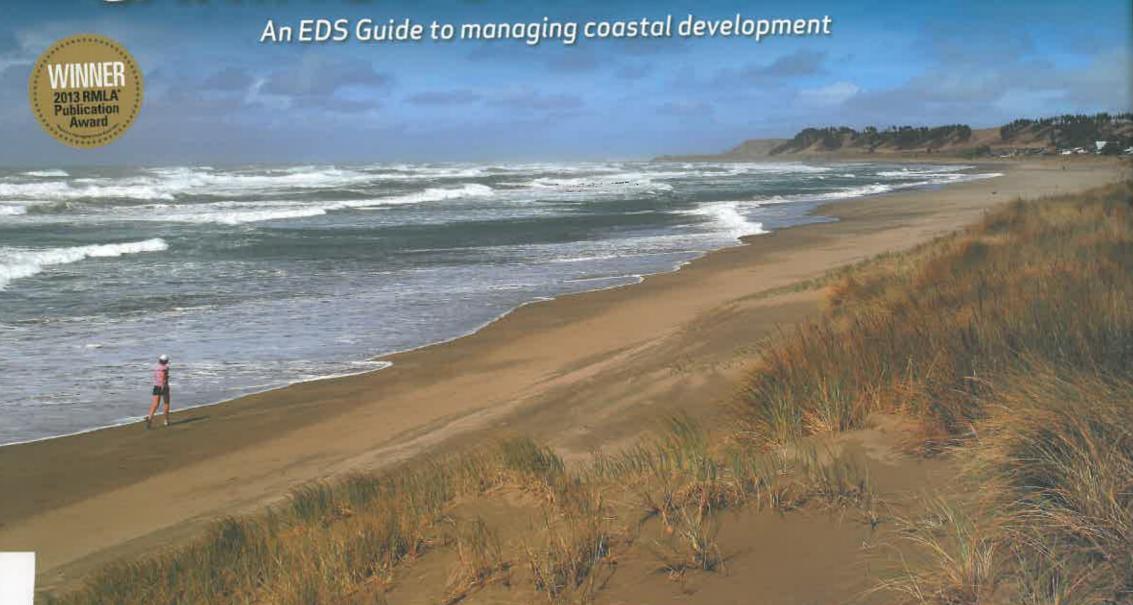
CARING FOR OUR COAST



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Lucy Brake and Raewyn Peart



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LEADERSHIP ON THE COAST

As a young schoolboy I biked out to the west coast one Sunday morning from my home in Newton Gully and found myself on a wild west coast beach. The experience changed my life. Here I was a kid, growing up in the heart of Auckland city, and only hearing stories of the Waitākere Ranges and the coast beyond. I wanted to see for myself what was there.

The local surf club was celebrating 21 years of lifesaving under the pōhutukawa and I think they took pity on an exhausted schoolboy. The invitation to join the club and to be part of this amazing group of young men, obviously enjoying themselves and somehow being part of a wild landscape, appealed to me greatly. So I accepted their offer not quite knowing what I was getting into.

Let me tell you what I was letting myself in for. It was a lifetime of commitment to that landscape. am unashamedly in love with the west coast in all its moods, its dangers and its beauty. I have been a lifeguard since that moment, close on 58 years, which is a long time to patrol between the flags. The coast has been my spiritual inspiration, the glue of my life.

I realised that many had come before to appreciate its beauty: painters, poets, writers and those escaping society and sometimes the law. Many had seen through new eyes the beauty of the west coast and had realised that this landscape was precious and needed to be nurtured and cared for.

When my turn came to step in to protect the coast, the job I chose was Mayor of Waitākere City. It seemed to me that to be an advocate and to show leadership was my only option. The creation of the eco city was justification for an enormous sea change in the west.

For 18 years I felt I carried the mantle of those who had gone before, those giants of environmental protection and those that cared and continued the good fight.

The success of the Waitākere Ranges Heritage Act, which was passed by one vote on the floor of the House of Representatives, was a triumph for the west Auckland community and for New Zealand. It acknowledged in law the outstanding values of the west coast and the Ranges. Without the support of John Edgar of the Waitākere Ranges Protection Society and Gary Taylor of the Environmental Defence Society, who brought wisdom and common sense to the table, we would not have succeeded Both these organisations have had more than two decades of successful negotiations and legal battles, often against enormous odds. I can't thank them enough

Now in the 21st century, the environmental issues are as important as ever. The threats to the coastal areas, settlements and landscape are real and in no way is the threat any less.

This guide is timely and much needed. It is a credit to those who have given freely of their knowledge and wisdom in setting out the legal status and what is required to maintain the balance between the environment and the needs of New Zealand's coastal development. This is a document of leadership and judgment and I hope it finds an audience that appreciates what we have, how precious it is, and that if lost or destroyed it is gone forever

Sir Bob Harvey QSO JP

Karekare



PREFACE

New Zealand is an assemblage of islands deep in the South Pacific Ocean. It is a coastal country and we all coastal people. The coast is a big part of our national identity. We are proud of it, and cherish it, and rightlour place has some of the best coastlines in the worl

The Environmental Defence Society has a long and proud history of involvement in coastal advocacy, stretching back to the 1970s. Things were simpler then. The challenge was to stop bad development through the courts. And we did that.

The magnificent white sand beach at Karikari, in the Far North, was saved from a gross Surfers Paradise style outcome, after several court challenges. The coast of the Coromandel Peninsula was a regular battleground as developers sought to convert coast farms to settlements, with results of varying quality An aluminium smelter was proposed on the coast at Aramoana, north of Dunedin, threatening a small settlement and important wildlife habitats. The proj was withdrawn in the face of widespread opposition

EDS litigated, won many cases and lost some.

Then came the reforms of the late 1980s that create the Department of Conservation and Ministry for the Environment. In 1991 the Resource Management Act was passed and the concept of sustainable





PREFACE

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EDS litigated, won many cases and lost some.

Then came the reforms of the late 1980s that created the Department of Conservation and Ministry for the Environment. In 1991 the Resource Management Act was passed and the concept of sustainable management had legal force in New Zealand. Coastal development became more complicated as we got to grips with the new legal and administrative framework.

In 1994 this new framework led to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, which sought to provide national direction for coastal management. Councils developed new policies and plans for the coast. The idea was to protect wild, undeveloped areas of coastline and to concentrate development in places that had already been compromised. Surveys of coastal landscapes helped identify priority areas for protection.

It sort of worked, but in a limited way. Some of the new plans looked good on paper, others did not, and exceptions were often made.

Around the beginning of the 21st century, a new breed of developers emerged. They had more capital and a personal commitment to doing it right. Consultation and negotiation with interest groups like EDS became the norm, rather than slugging it out in the courts.

Development approvals carried substantial mitigation obligations, like native forest restoration and landscaping. Environmental compensation was often offered rather than extracted. Ridgelines were out of bounds. Mountain Landing and Ōmarino in Northland exemplify the new approach.

A new Coastal Policy Statement emerged in 2010. EDS put a lot of effort into that process. We presented extensive submissions and expert evidence to the Board of Inquiry. The new document provides more direction and certainty than the 1994 version, although case law is still evolving.

When the New Zealand economy has truly recovered from the global financial crisis we can expect a new development push on the coast, so Caring for our Coast: an EDS Guide to managing coastal development is timely. It showcases the best and the worst, rural and urban. The Guide distills all of our experience, together with that of the many experts who contributed, into a how to do it well manual for coastal management.

It's pictorial, it's relatively short and it's extremely readable and user-friendly. It charts a better way for the future of New Zealand's coasts. We hope it will make a difference.

Actually, we hope it will make a big difference.



Gary Taylor QSOChairman
Environmental Defence Society



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