

Disasters, discourse and new directions? Reflections on the renewal phase in post-tsunami Sri Lanka

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In this paper the concept of natural disasters as opportunities for increasing the resilience of social-ecological systems is explored through the analysis of sets of storylines (narratives on social reality) that appear in post-tsunami environmental discourse. In particular this paper examines narratives from actors involved in funding, facilitating and implementing coastal environmental initiatives in Sri Lanka in the wake of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. By analysing this discourse this study aims to show the confluence of post-tsunami ideas regarding the conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems in Sri Lanka, and how these relate to resilience theory; specifically socio-ecological theory on the back-loop of adaptive cycles. Additionally this paper provides some reflections on the implications for governing natural disasters and future climate change uncertainties.