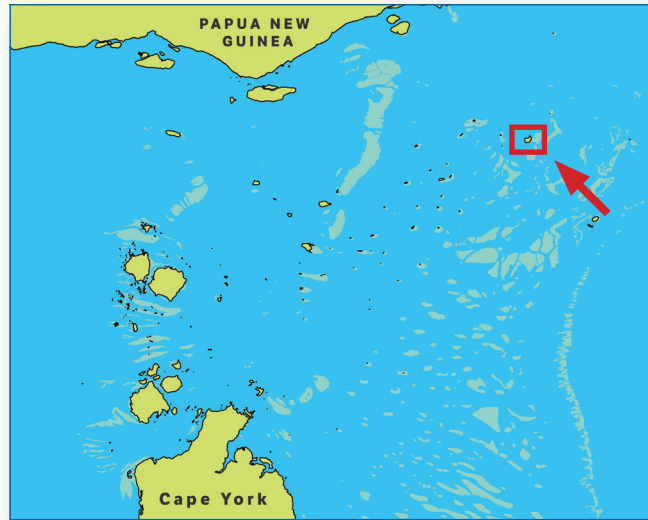


# Erub Land and Sea Profile



## OVERVIEW

Traditional island name	<b>Erub</b>
Western name	<b>Darnley</b>
Eastern Islands Cluster	<b>Kemer Kemer Meriam Nation</b>
Local government	<b>TSIRC &amp; TSC</b>
Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBC)	<b>Erubam Le Traditional Land and Sea Owners (TSI) Corp. RNTBC</b>
Land type	<b>Volcanic Island</b>
Air distance from Thursday Island (km)	<b>205</b>
Area (ha)	<b>582</b>
Indicative max length (km)	<b>3</b>
Indicative max breadth (km)	<b>3</b>
Max elevation (m)	<b>178</b>
Coastline length (km)	<b>11</b>
Population (2011 ABS Census)	<b>374</b>
Area of island zoned development (ha)	<b>35</b>
Area of disturbed / undisturbed vegetation (ha/%)	<b>123 (21.1%) / 459 (78.9%)</b>

## RANGER GROUP



Rangers  
2015



## MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

### LAND



- Island plants and animals / land patrol
- Burning
- Weeds
- Coastal management (beach patrol)
- Feral animals
- Community garden and nursery

### SEA



- Sea patrol
- Turtle and dugong
- Water quality
- Coral monitoring

### PEOPLE



- Traditional ecological knowledge
- Community involvement
- Traditional and cultural sites
- Visitor management
- Training

## KEY VALUES



Healthy sea ecosystems



Marine water quality



Coral reefs



Seagrass meadows



Dugong



Marine turtles



Subsistence fishing



Healthy land ecosystems



Sustainable human settlements



Coasts and beaches



Mangroves and wetlands



Coastal birds

## CLIMATE CHANGE RISK

Vulnerability to sea level rise (+1.0m) **Low**

Sea level rise response options **High**





## COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Erub is a small (582ha) volcanic island in the Eastern Islands Cluster of the Torres Strait about 205km north east of Thursday Island. Erub (population 374) is a basaltic island at the western end of an extensive 5km long reef. The community is located in eleven villages along the southwestern and southern sides of the island.

The topography of Erub includes steep slopes rising to a central peak, Mt Lalawa (highest point 178m). The coastal bays typically have exposed rocky headlands enclosing narrow sand beaches. The fertile basalt derived soils support a simple but unique vine forest association, with some clearings for banana, cassava, taro and sweet potato gardens. Over 78% of the island is covered in undisturbed vegetation, with vine forests mostly on the sheltered slopes and escarpments, grasslands and mangroves on the coastal margins.

Native title is recognised over Erub and is held in trust by the Erubam Le Traditional Land and Sea Owners (Torres Strait Islander) Corporation RNTBC.



This map is based on existing dugong and turtle management areas and shows the general areas of operation for community-based land and sea Rangers. Best available information (including traditional place names) has been used at the time of publication. This map is indicative only and not intended for native title purposes.

## RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Recent land and sea management achievements include:

- Community-based dugong and turtle management plan in place
- Ranger group established and Rangers implementing activities under Working on Country plans
- Rangers involved in an erosion control program to reduce sedimentation and stabilise land
- Ranger participation in mangrove and shoreline monitoring and surveys
- Lantana control efforts underway
- Community participation in the Sustainable Horticulture Project, including the establishment of a school garden and community fruit tree planting
- Propagation of native plants within the existing nursery

## LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT AREA

The Erubam Le land and sea management area includes a number of uninhabited islands, reefs and marine areas (see map) covering about 481,178 ha.

## MAIN THREATENING PROCESSES

The main threatening processes affecting the Erubam Le land and sea management area relate to climate change (inundation from sea level rise and coastal erosion), the spread of pest plants and animals, and declining water quality (including marine debris and increasing sedimentation).

## LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

Twelve management priorities under the themes of Land, Sea, and People are identified in the Erubam Le Working on Country Ranger Plan. There are 3 Ranger positions (as at 2015). The Erubam Rangers will continue to work closely with the community on priority projects including dugong and turtle management, protecting significant cultural sites, preserving Traditional Ecological Knowledge, land patrol on surrounding uninhabited islands and managing pests.

## DUGONG AND TURTLE MANAGEMENT

The Erub community are actively implementing the Erubam Le Dugong and Turtle Management Plan 2011-2016, that is built on the Erubam Le vision:

*“To ensure deger a nam is here for our next generations into the future and that our traditional knowledge continues to be passed on through the generations. To share the responsibility of effective management of turtle and dugong populations in the Torres Strait, whilst maintaining our customary entitlement to the sustainable harvest of these cultural resources.”*

## CLIMATE CHANGE PROFILE

Climate change in the Torres Strait will involve a warming of air and sea temperatures, rising sea levels, more severe weather events, ocean acidification and some changes to rainfall patterns, evaporation, wind and ocean currents. These changes are predicted to have long-term impacts on all of the region's key values across the Land, Sea and People themes. Erub has a medium vulnerability rating to sea level rise and a 'very high' response options rating (there are good options to move to a safer site on the island). A rise of 50 cm will start to cause significant tidal inundation of the community. For more information on climate change, please see the Torres Strait Climate Change Strategy 2014-2018.

## TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

The Erubam Le community is working to protect Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) for future generations. The TEK system enables communities to access information for their own cultural maintenance; support sustainable community based environmental management approaches; and allows Indigenous Rangers' planning and on-ground cultural and natural resource management activities to be informed by Ailan Kastom (Island Custom).

## COMMUNITY HORTICULTURE

The Erub community is working to achieve an active food producing community garden in place to preserve traditional gardening skills and support greater community self-sufficiency in food production. Erubam Rangers have played a role in supporting the school nursery.

## FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

The Erub community is highly reliant on air transport, diesel powered electricity generation and barge transport of supplies and materials to and from the community. Renewable energy options will be explored to reduce carbon emissions and work towards energy independence.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Erubam Rangers engage with the community through frequent community notices and ranger talks, community participation in ranger activities, and an annual community celebration and report back. This ensures land and sea management activities remain relevant to community priorities.

## SOME OF ERUB'S IMPORTANT ANIMALS & PLANTS



Coastal Sheathtail Bat  
Photo: Julie Broken-Brow



Eastern Curlew  
Photo: Terry Reis



Native or Cape Bamboo  
Photo: David Fell



Cooktown Orchid  
Photo: John Hill, Wikimedia Commons

## FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information, visit the TSRA website at <http://www.tsra.gov.au> and the Torres Strait eAtlas <http://ts.eatlas.org.au/ts>