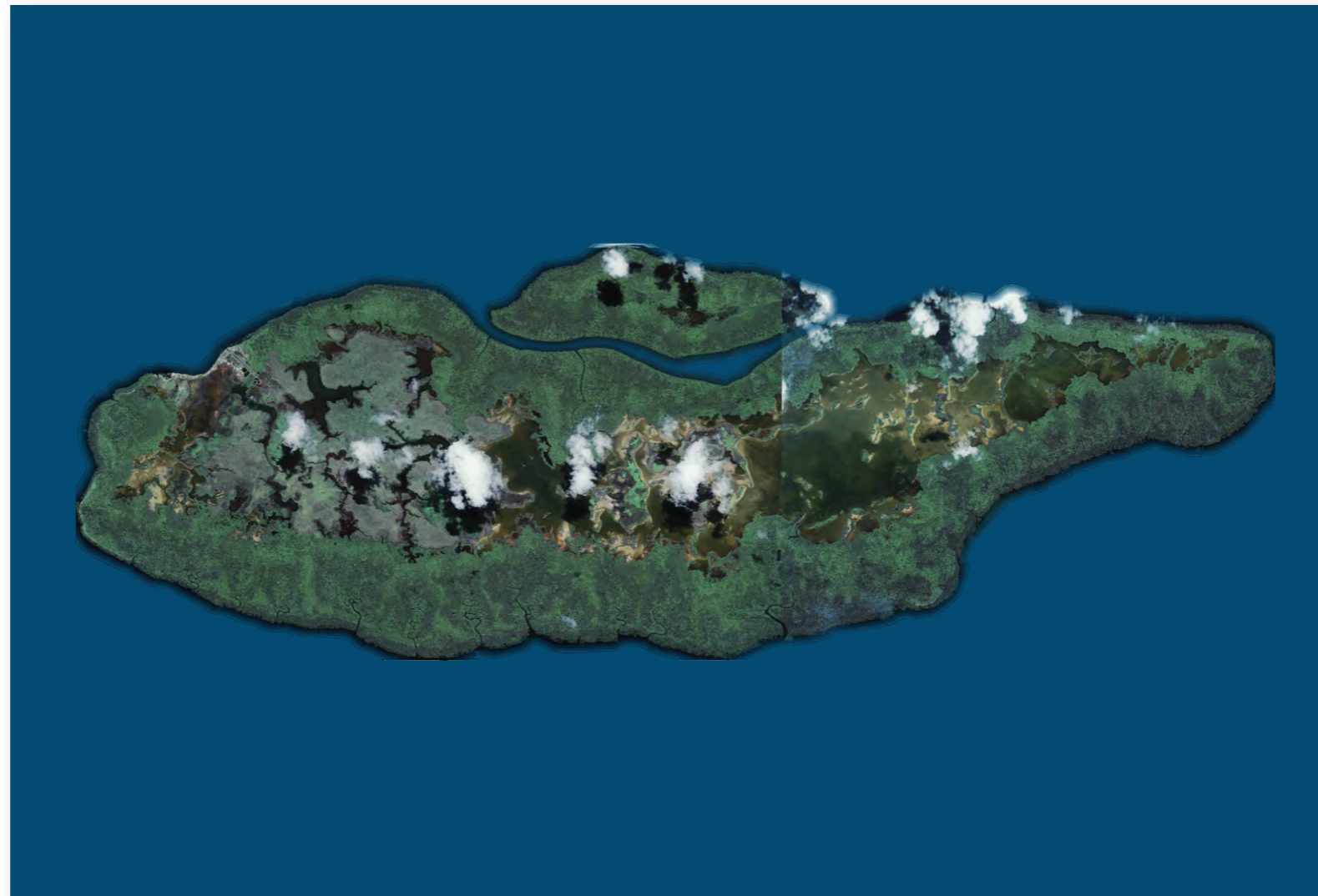
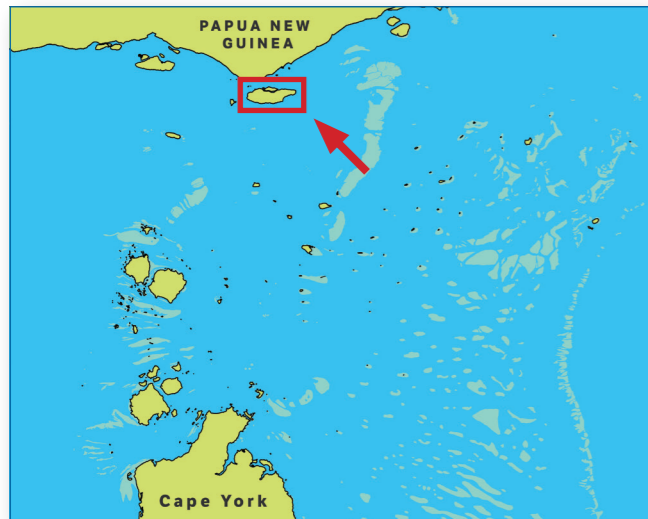



Saibai Land and Sea Profile




OVERVIEW	
Traditional island name	Saibai
Western name	Saibai
Top Western Islands Cluster	Guda Maluilgal Nation
Local government	TSIRC & TSC
Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBC)	Saibai Mura Buway (TSI) Corp. RNTBC
Land type	Alluvial (mud) Island
Air distance from Thursday Island (km)	141
Area (ha)	10460
Indicative max length (km)	22.7
Indicative max breadth (km)	8.1
Max elevation (m)	5
Coastline length (km)	53
Population (2011 ABS Census)	480
Area of island zoned development (ha)	32
Area of disturbed / undisturbed vegetation (ha/%)	63 (0.6%) / 10397 (99.4%)

RANGER GROUP



Rangers 2015



MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

LAND



- Land Patrol • Native nursery
- Weeds • Community garden
- Native plants and animals
- Burning • Coastal management (beach patrol) • Feral animals

SEA















- Sea patrol
- Turtle and dugong

PEOPLE



- Traditional and cultural sites
- Community involvement
- Training
- Traditional ecological knowledge
- Research support

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) **Very High**

Sea level rise response options **Very Low**

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Saibai is a very large (10,460ha) alluvial (mud) island in the Top Western Islands Cluster of the Torres Strait about 141km north of Thursday Island. Saibai (population 480) lies just a few km from Papua New Guinea (PNG) and is formed from alluvial mud deposited on decayed coral platforms by the adjacent large river systems in PNG, including the Fly River. The community is located on the northwestern side of the island.

The topography of Saibai is extremely flat with ground level generally less than one metre above local mean sea level (highest point 5m) with large interior swamps filled with brackish water. More than 99% of the island is covered in undisturbed vegetation. The key vegetation types are open woodlands and grasslands, and wetlands, including mangrove and saltpan communities. Mangroves line the entire perimeter shores except in front of community areas.

Native title is recognised over Saibai and is held in trust by the Saibai Mura Buway (Torres Strait Islander) Corporation RNTBC.

LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT AREA

The Saibai Mura Buway land and sea management area includes a number of uninhabited islands, reefs and marine areas (see map) covering about 297,726 ha. The land and sea country area is shared with Dauan Simakal. Saibai is divided into seven clan groups.



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
- Ranger participation in mangrove and shoreline monitoring and surveys using the Ranger vessel
- Community participation in the Sustainable Horticulture Project, including the establishment of a community garden and community fruit tree planting
- Participation in invasive fish surveys and efforts to contain the spread of Climbing Perch

MAIN THREATENING PROCESSES

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

LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

Fifteen management priorities under the themes of Land, Sea, and People are identified in the Saibai Mura Buway Working on Country Ranger Plan. There are 3 Ranger positions (as at 2015). The Saibai Mura Buway 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, and managing pests and fire.

DUGONG AND TURTLE MANAGEMENT

The Saibai community is actively implementing the Saibai Dugong and Turtle Management Plan 2011-2016, that is built on the Saibai Mura Buway vision:

“Mura Buai are the custodians of the species of dugong and turtle and wish to utilise both cultural and western knowledge management systems to conserve them.”

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. Saibai has a 'very high' vulnerability rating to sea level rise and a 'very low' response options rating (there are limited options to move to a safer site on the island). Regular flooding already occurs during high tides and current improvements in the seawall and bund will help to reduce the impact of these events on the community. For more information on climate change, please see the Torres Strait Climate Change Strategy 2014-2018.

TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

The Saibai community are 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 Saibai community has an active food producing community garden in place to preserve traditional gardening skills and support greater community self-sufficiency in food production. Saibai Mura Buway Rangers have played a role in the community nursery for propagation of native plants for revegetation projects.

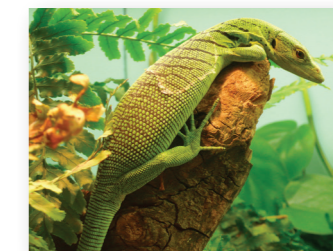
FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

The Saibai 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

Saibai Mura Buway 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 SAIBAI'S IMPORTANT ANIMALS & PLANTS



Emerald Monitor
Photo: Tim Vickers, Wikimedia Commons



Rajah Shelduck
Photo: Terry Reis



Antelope Orchid
Photo: Orchi, Wikimedia Commons



Mauritian Grass
Photo: J.M. Garg

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>