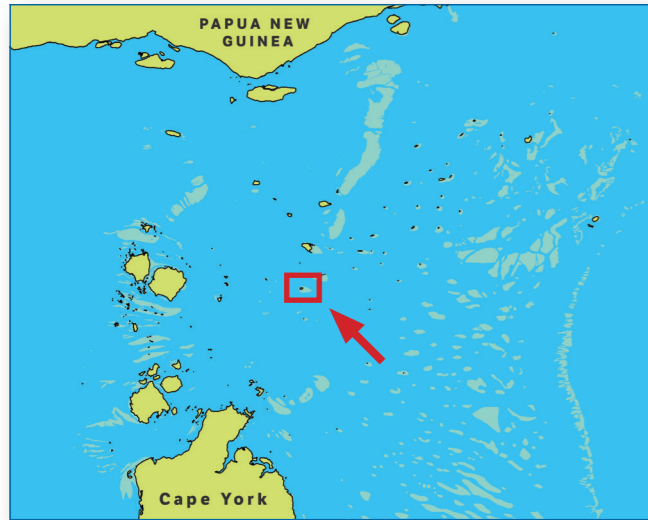


Warraber Land and Sea Profile



OVERVIEW

Traditional island name	Warraber
Western name	Sue
Central Islands Cluster	Kulkaigal Nation
Local government	TSIRC & TSC
Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBC)	Warraberalgal (TSI) Corporation RNTBC
Land type	Coral Cay
Air distance from Thursday Island (km)	79
Area (ha)	78
Indicative max length (km)	1.4
Indicative max breadth (km)	0.7
Max elevation (m)	6
Coastline length (km)	3
Population (2011 ABS Census)	250
Area of island zoned development (ha)	29
Area of disturbed / undisturbed vegetation (ha/%)	52 (66.7%) / 26 (33.3%)

RANGER GROUP



Rangers
2015



MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

LAND



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

SEA



- Crocodiles
- Marine debris
- Coral monitoring
- Water quality
- Turtle and dugong

PEOPLE



- Traditional ecological knowledge
- Community involvement
- Traditional and cultural sites (including IPA)
- 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) **High**

Sea level rise response options **Low**



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Warraber is a very small (78ha) coral cay in the Central Islands Cluster of the Torres Strait about 79km north east of Thursday Island. Warraber (population 250) is an oval shaped island with a coastline of sandy beaches and community located on the eastern end.

The topography of Warraber is very flat with elevations generally just a few metres above sea level (highest point 6m). Soils are medium to coarse grain overlying a cemented body of beach rock atop coral platforms and are prone to coastal erosion. About 33% of the small island is covered in undisturbed vegetation, mostly to the west of the airstrip that bisects the island. Vegetation includes vine thickets and dune grasslands.

Native title is recognised over Warraber and is held in trust by the Warraberalgal (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
- Community participation in the Sustainable Horticulture Project, including a community fruit tree planting
- Joint community project to undertake small scale coastal works for Warraber
- Declaration and management of the new Warraberalgal and Porumalgal Indigenous Protected Area
- Participation by Rangers in biodiversity surveys on nine islands that recorded over 220 species of plants, 79 of which are known to be culturally significant. Fauna survey results included more than 100 bird species, 14 species of reptiles and 1 mammal species
- Pilot waste management and recycling project to sort waste and minimise the volume of waste going to landfill

LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT AREA

The Warraberalgal land and sea management area includes a number of uninhabited islands, reefs and marine areas (see map) covering about 316,192 ha.

MAIN THREATENING PROCESSES

The main threatening processes affecting the Warraberalgal 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

Sixteen management priorities under the themes of Land, Sea, and People are identified in the Warraberalgal Working on Country Ranger Plan. There are 3 Ranger positions (as at 2015). The Warraberalgal 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.

DUGONG AND TURTLE MANAGEMENT

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

“To develop sustainable management and use of dugong and turtle resources within the sea boundaries of the Kulkalgal nation (Central Islands) to protect the traditional way of life and livelihood of the Traditional inhabitants.”

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. Warraber has a 'high' vulnerability rating to sea level rise and a 'low' response options rating (there are limited options to move to a safer site on the island). A rise of 60 cm will start to cause more regular 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 Warraber 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 Warraber community has an active food producing community garden in place to preserve traditional gardening skills and support greater community self-sufficiency in food production. Warraberalgal Rangers have played a role in the establishment and maintenance of the community nursery.

FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

The Warraber 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

Warraberalgal 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 WARRABER'S IMPORTANT ANIMALS & PLANTS



Sooty Oystercatcher
Photo: Glen Fergus, Wikimedia Commons



Beach Stone-curlew
Photo: Terry Reis



Wongai
Photo: Melinda McLean



Coral Tree
Photo: Matt Dunn

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>