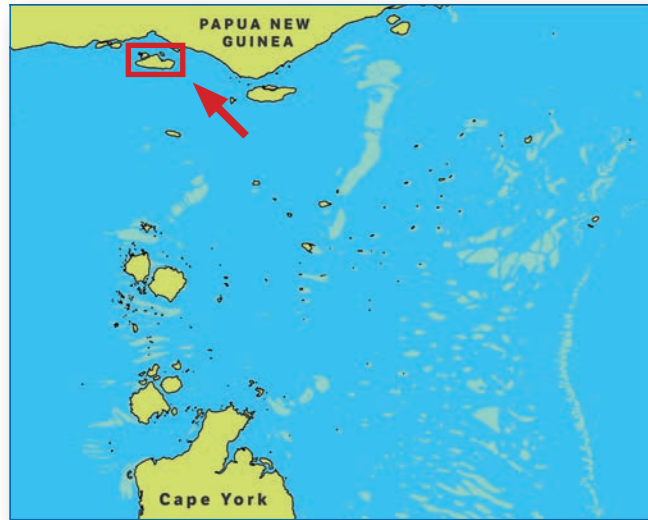



# Boigu Land and Sea Profile




OVERVIEW	
Traditional island name	<b>Boigu</b>
Western name	<b>Talbot</b>
Top Western Islands Cluster	<b>Guda Maluilgal Nation</b>
Local government	<b>TSIRC &amp; TSC</b>
Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBC)	<b>Malu Ki'ai (TSI) Corporation RNTBC</b>
Land type	<b>Alluvial (mud) Island</b>
Air distance from Thursday Island (km)	<b>150</b>
Area (ha)	<b>7181</b>
Indicative max length (km)	<b>17</b>
Indicative max breadth (km)	<b>6</b>
Max elevation (m)	<b>3</b>
Coastline length (km)	<b>44</b>
Population (2011 ABS Census)	<b>207</b>
Area of island zoned development (ha)	<b>37</b>
Area of disturbed / undisturbed vegetation (ha/%)	<b>41 (0.6%) / 7140 (99.4%)</b>

### RANGER GROUP



Rangers 2015



### MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

**LAND**



- Weeds • Feral animals
- Native plants and animals
- Burning
- Coastal management (beach patrol)

**SEA**















- Crocodiles
- Turtle and dugong
- Marine debris

**PEOPLE**



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

### 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

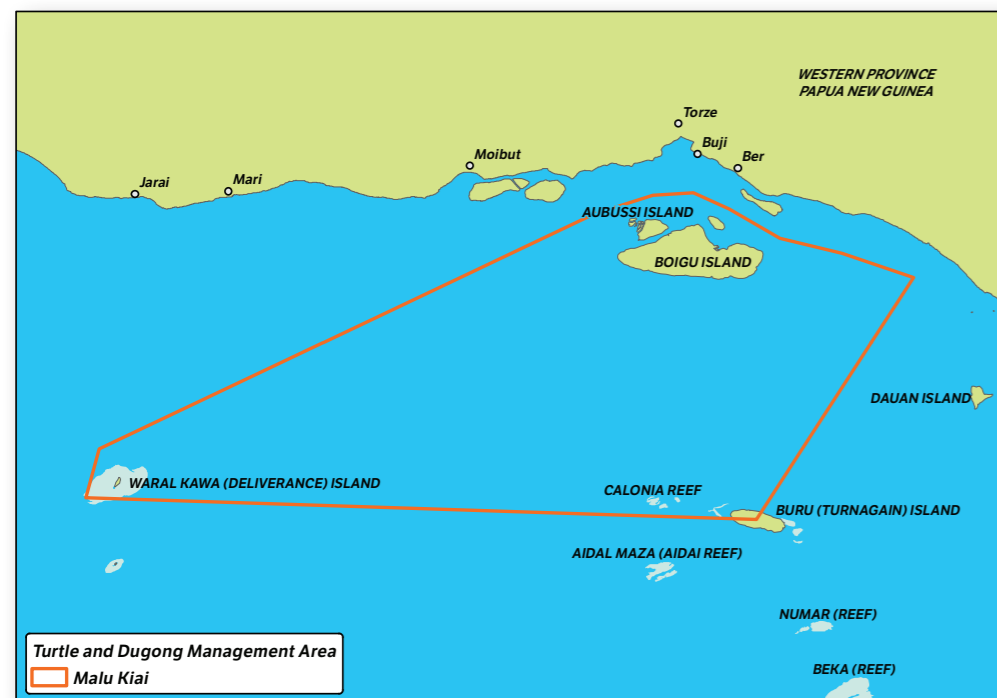
Boigu is a large (7,181ha) alluvial (mud) island in the Top Western Islands Cluster of the Torres Strait about 150km north of Thursday Island. Boigu (population 207) lies just a few kilometres from Papua New Guinea (PNG) and is formed from alluvial mud deposited on decayed coral platforms by the adjacent large river systems in PNG, including the Fly River. The community is located on the northern side of the island.

The topography of Boigu is extremely flat with ground level generally less than one metre above local mean sea level (highest point 3m) 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 Boigu Island and is held in trust by the Malu Ki'ai (Torres Strait Islander) Corporation RNTBC.

## LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT AREA

The Malu Ki'ai land and sea management area includes a number of uninhabited islands, reefs and marine areas (see map) covering about 244,962ha. The area includes the first Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) in the Torres Strait, Warul Kawa (Deliverance Island), declared in 2000.



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 a community fruit tree planting
- Ranger and RNTBC participation in the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) project, including training in the use of the TEK database system
- Marine debris monitoring and management activities, including removal of ghost nets
- Feral animal management, weed mapping and management
- Participation in invasive fish surveys and efforts to contain the spread of Climbing Perch

## MAIN THREATENING PROCESSES

The main threatening processes affecting the Malu Ki'ai 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

Eleven management priorities under the themes of Land, Sea, and People are identified in the Malu Ki'ai Working on Country Ranger Plan. There are 3 Ranger positions (as at 2015). The Malu Ki'ai 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 Boigu community are actively implementing the Boigu Dugong and Turtle Management Plan 2011-2016, that is built on the Malu Ki'ai vision:

*“Sustainability of sea based resources and the reinforcement of traditional values, cultural protocols, and ethics for the traditional people of Malu Ki'ai.”*

## 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. Boigu 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 planned 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 Boigu 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

Some members of the Boigu community have individual food producing gardens that help preserve traditional gardening skills and support greater community self-sufficiency in food production.

## FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

The Boigu 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

Malu Ki'ai 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 BOIGU'S IMPORTANT ANIMALS & PLANTS



Eclectus Parrot  
Photo: Quartl, Wikimedia Commons



Saltwater or Estuarine Crocodile  
Photo: Terry Reis



Purple holly mangrove  
Photo: David Fell



Nypa palm  
Photo: Bernard Dupont, 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>