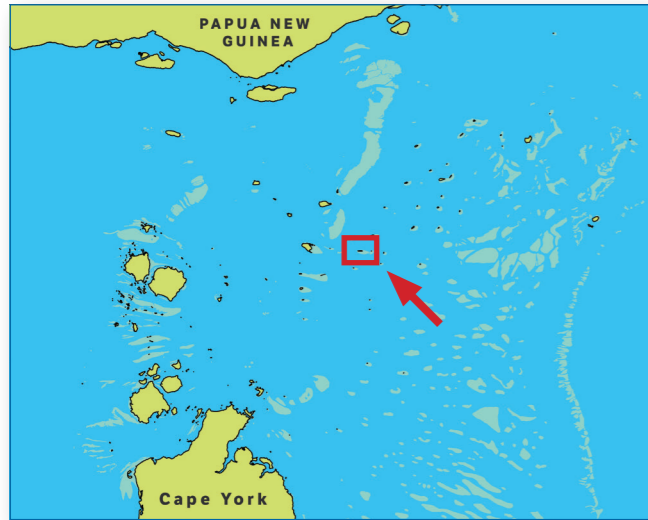


# Poruma Land and Sea Profile



## OVERVIEW

Traditional island name	<b>Poruma</b>
Western name	<b>Coconut Island</b>
Central Islands Cluster	<b>Kulkalgal Nation</b>
Local government	<b>TSIRC &amp; TSC</b>
Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBC)	<b>Porumalgal (TSI) Corporation RNTBC</b>
Land type	<b>Coral cay</b>
Air distance from Thursday Island (km)	<b>112</b>
Area (ha)	<b>51</b>
Indicative max length (km)	<b>2</b>
Indicative max breadth (km)	<b>0.3</b>
Max elevation (m)	<b>12</b>
Coastline length (km)	<b>4</b>
Population (2011 ABS Census)	<b>149</b>
Area of island zoned development (ha)	<b>19</b>
Area of disturbed / undisturbed vegetation (ha/%)	<b>36 (70.6%) / 15 (29.4%)</b>

## RANGER GROUP



Rangers  
2015



## MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

### LAND



- Disaster recovery
- Weeds
- Coastal management (beach patrol)
- Feral animals
- Community garden
- Native nursery
- Revegetation

### SEA



- Marine debris
- Sea patrol
- Crocodiles
- Coral monitoring
- Turtle and dugong

### PEOPLE



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

## 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 **Medium**

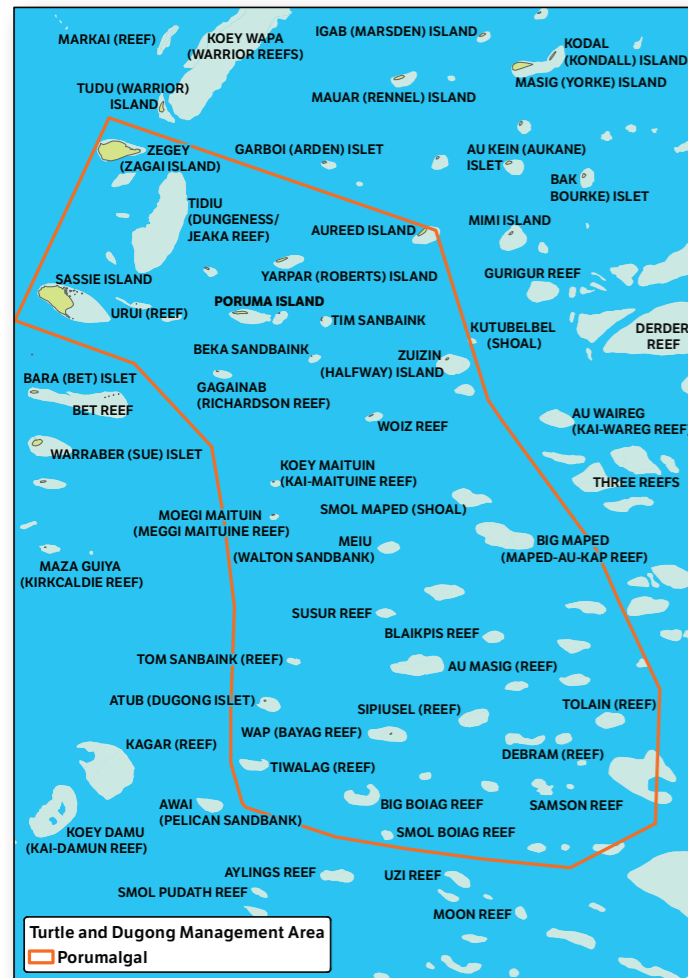


## COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Poruma is a very small (51ha) coral cay in the Central Islands Cluster of the Torres Strait about 112km north east of Thursday Island. Poruma (population 149) is a long narrow island with a coastline of sandy beaches and village located on the western end.

The topography of Poruma is very flat, with elevations generally between 5m and 7m above sea level (highest point 12m). Soils are medium to coarse grain overlying a cemented body of beach rock atop coral platforms and are prone to coastal erosion. About 29% of the small island is covered in undisturbed vegetation, mostly to the north east of the island airstrip.

Native title is recognised over Poruma and is held in trust by the Porumalgal (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
- Weed mapping and management
- 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

## LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT AREA

The Porumalgal land and sea management area includes a number of uninhabited islands, reefs and marine areas (see map) covering about 457,220 ha.

## MAIN THREATENING PROCESSES

The main threatening processes affecting the Porumalgal 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

Fifteen management priorities under the themes of Land, Sea, and People are identified in the Porumalgal Working on Country Ranger Plan. There are 2 Ranger positions (as at 2015). The Porumalgal 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 Poruma community is actively implementing the Poruma Dugong and Turtle Management Plan 2011-2016, that is built on the Porumalgal vision:

*“To ensure the sustainable management of dugong and turtle through the implementation of culturally appropriate arrangements based on cultural protocols.”*

## 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. Poruma 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 20 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 Poruma 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 Poruma community has an active food producing community garden in place to preserve traditional gardening skills and support greater community self-sufficiency in food production. Porumalgal Rangers have played a role in the establishment and maintenance of the community nursery.

## FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

The Poruma 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

Porumalgal 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 PORUMA'S IMPORTANT ANIMALS & PLANTS



Sooty Oystercatcher  
Photo: Glen Fergus, Wikimedia Commons



Beach Stone-curlew  
Photo: Terry Reis



Wongai  
Photo: Melinda McLean



Cedar Bay Cherry  
Photo: David Fell

## 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>