

Torres Strait school students are caring for their marine resources.

Yorke Island State School students learned about sponges and the sponge aquaculture project.



Enthusiastic students at careers festivals in Bamaga and Waibene found out how to become marine resource managers in Torres Strait.

Thursday Island High School students are monitoring Waibene's Back Beach with Seagrass Watch. Thursday Island State School is taking care of Federal Beach with their Clean Beach initiative. Horn Island State School is also taking part in Seagrass Watch near the jetty in Ngurupai.

CRC Torres Strait is a not-for-profit company established to implement the Torres Strait research program supplementary to the Cooperative Research Centre for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (incorporated as CRC Reef Research Centre Limited). It is supported by the Australian Government Cooperative Research Centres Program.



Members of CRC Torres Strait Ltd are:

- o Australian Fisheries Management Authority
- o Australian Institute of Marine Science
- o CRC Reef Research Centre
- o CSIRO Marine Research
- o Geoscience Australia
- o James Cook University
- o National Oceans Office
- o Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries
- o Torres Strait Regional Authority

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Photo: Kenny Bedford

To care for Torres Strait's marine resources, we need information about the plants and animals that live in the region. We also need to understand how we affect them by fishing, hunting and shipping.

CRC Torres Strait is working with Islanders to collect information that will help to manage Torres Strait's marine resources for the future.

CRC Torres Strait research began in 2003. There are 23 projects underway.

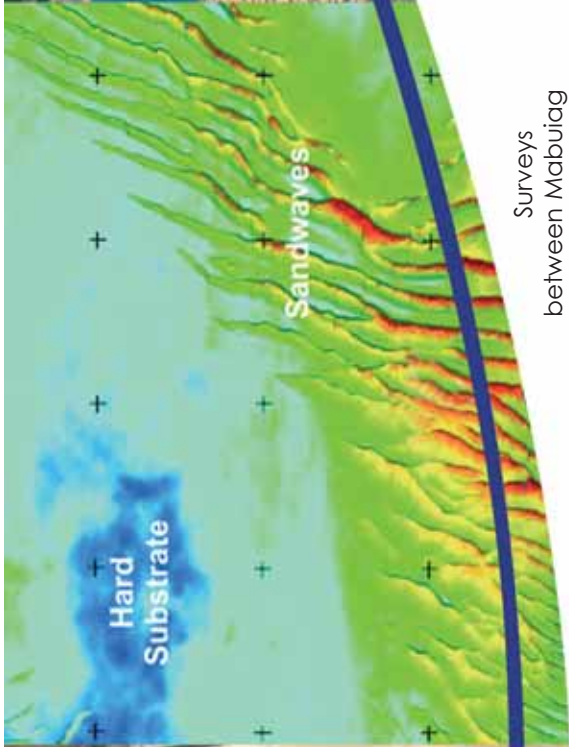
**Cooperative Research Centre for Torres Strait**



Kiriri and Waibene Islanders are working with CRC Torres Strait researchers to monitor the catch of **dugong and turtle**. Two islanders are employed on the project, and four community members are being trained in turtle tagging, measuring and collecting skin samples for DNA analysis.



In 2003-04, the Torres Strait **rock lobster fishery** had its highest catches since 1992. The 2005 lobster survey found that the catch rate of commercial-sized lobsters remained high. However, the catch rate of younger lobsters during the survey was low, and the fishery will need to be carefully managed in the long-term.



Surveys between Mabuig and Boigu Islands found that **sandwaves on the seabed** move west across the Torres Strait. Water movements change with the seasons and move the sandwaves. Most movement was during the monsoon season. During spring tides, sediment is churned up from the seabed, making the water murky. Sediment from the Fly River does not reach the region.



Five Masig Islanders are working with researchers to grow **sponges for aquaculture**. The sponges are growing very fast, and doubled in size in two months.



**Seagrass beds, coral reefs, rocky reefs and algal beds** were surveyed in the Port of Waibene Island, and on reefs and islands near the major shipping channels that pass the Waibene Island group. These habitats support local fisheries including dugong and turtle.



Surveys of **sea cucumbers** on Warrior Reef found that the sandfish population has not yet recovered from overfishing.

