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TSRA RANGERS JOIN RIVERS TO REEF TO TURTLES EXPEDITION

The Torres Strait Regional Authority's (TSRA) Rangers have assisted the Rivers to Reef to Turtle Expedition to find out if pollutants are affecting coastal green turtle populations off the Great Barrier Reef.

Led by Dr Ian Bell from the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, the Expedition was a collaboration with WWF-Australia, universities, government agencies and Traditional Owners.

The Rangers worked for one week in the Howick Group of Islands, located offshore from Cape Melville in far north Queensland.

TSRA Chairperson, Mr Joseph Elu, the TSRA Rangers were trained in Queensland Turtle Conservation Project monitoring techniques, learning new information for the sustainable management of marine turtles.

"The Expedition Project also collected turtle monitoring information at Cape Upstart and Cleveland Bay in the Townsville to Bowen region of the Great Barrier Reef," Mr Elu said.

The TSRA Rangers that attended were Boigu Senior Ranger Nelson Gibuma, Warraber Ranger Mark Pearson, Mua Ranger Fred Wapau and Mua Ranger Guyai Uiduldam.

Mr Elu said the rangers participated in tagging and measuring turtles, recording information, sampling foraging habitat and assisting with turtle bio-monitoring sampling.

"Turtles were weighed, measured, had blood taken, tagged, and returned; there was also some dugongs captured and released after measurements and blood samples were taken," Mr Elu said.

"Water, sediment and seagrass sampling were also collected to better understand the levels of toxins turtle are exposed to."

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