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TSRA LAND AND SEA UNIT SCOOPS THE POOL AT NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Land and Sea Management Unit (LSMU) has won two of Australia's most prestigious environmental awards including an award for an outstanding contribution to national sustainability.

The TSRA Environment Portfolio Member, Mr Willie Lui, was presented with the Banksia Indigenous Award and a Gold Banksia Award in Melbourne on Wednesday 9 October.

The gold award recognised the LSMU as the best entrant in eleven major categories of the annual awards.

The TSRA Chairman, Mr Joseph Elu, said the awards were fitting recognition for the LSMU which had successfully championed an Indigenous community-based management approach to protecting the unique island and marine biodiversity of the Torres Strait.

“The awards also acknowledge the services the LSMU has performed on behalf of Torres Strait Islander people, the Queensland and Australian Governments and the nation to develop and implement culturally appropriate and sustainable land and sea management.

“The TSRA established the LSMU in 2006 to coordinate the delivery of natural resource management programs in the region.

“There are now 38 island based Indigenous rangers including trainees operating out of fourteen Ranger offices across the Torres Strait and funding has been secured to fund the program for another five years.

“The Unit helps communities to access financial and technical assistance and information about the sustainable management of their environments and also improves coordination, communication and collaboration between communities, all levels of government and research organisations to achieve improved conservation outcomes.”

Mr Elu said the LSMU also ensured that Indigenous customary knowledge and management techniques were appropriately recognised and incorporated in management regimes, especially for culturally iconic species such as dugongs and marine turtles.

“The community-based planning and management approach acknowledges the critical role of communities in acting as local custodians of their environment and has been a very important contributor to the success of the LSMU's operations and in taking out these awards,” Mr Elu said.



Caption: LSMU staff Mia Isherwood and Jenni Pilot with Environment Portfolio Member, Willie Lui, at the Banksia Award presentations.

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