

## Media Release No.525

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### **OLD AND NEW WAYS BLEND IN SAIBAI ISLAND GARDENS PROJECT**

Two community gardens have been established on Saibai in response to concerns about the availability of fresh produce on the island.

One garden is a traditional Torres Strait Islands food crop garden growing mainly root vegetables.

The other is a contemporary garden showcasing cultivation of non-traditional crops not grown on the island before such as summer fruits, herbs, salad crops, corn, ginger, garlic, onion and potatoes.

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Chairman, Mr Joseph Elu, said the gardens will serve two important purposes creating a model for other communities and providing fresh local food.

“It is very important that fresh vegetables are available in the community.

“The community gardens at Saibai will blend our traditional gardening with contemporary horticultural practices so the community can see a wider range of garden produce and maybe learn to grow them too.”

The Seven Clans of Saibai Island blessed the gardens with each clan representative planting a coconut to show the unity in the project.

The representatives are eager to further redevelop traditional garden plots and to expand the gardens to include other crops.

The project was a result of collaboration between the Saibai Mura Buway (TSI) Corporation, the Seven Clans of Saibai Island, TSRA’s Land and Sea Management Unit staff including Mura Buway Rangers and Regional Landcare Facilitator, George Saveka.

The Torres Strait Island Regional Council, provided machinery to develop a fire break and a fence line, while other support for the project was provided by My Pathways, Councillor Ron Enosa and the TSRA Board Member, Chelsea Aniba.

The TSRA Rangers and Regional Landcare Facilitator, both funded by the Australian Government, play an important role in supporting Torres Strait communities’ natural resource management aspirations including sustainable horticulture.



Caption: TSRA Saibai Rangers, Dauan Rangers, Ranger Trainees and Regional Landcare Facilitator work together with Saibai community members and My Pathways participants to prepare garden beds using traditional methods.



Caption: Mr Thomas Warusam planting a coconut with TSRA Ranger Trainees Aaron Bon and Shanice Havili as a garden blessing by the seven clans of Saibai.

**ENDS**