



Media Release **No. 548**

For immediate release 10 April 2014

SURVEYS SHOW GOOD OUTCOMES FOR THE FUTURE OF GREEN TURTLES IN THE TORRES STRAIT

Recent surveys in the Torres Strait confirm that Maizub Kaur (Bramble Cay) is successfully producing many green turtle hatchlings for future generations despite their endangered status.

The surveys were conducted by Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Rangers in partnership with the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection – Threatened Species Branch biodiversity survey team from James Cook University (JCU).

TSRA Chairman Mr Joseph Elu commended the work put in by all participants and the collaboration between the TSRA's Land and Sea Management Unit and the JCU biodiversity survey team.

"The research confirmed high rates of hatchling and emergence success, which is a great outcome for the future generations of green turtles on Maizub Kaur," Mr Elu said.

"The TSRA's Land and Sea Management Unit participates in co-operative research to monitor and better understand the marine biodiversity in the Torres Strait."

The TSRA's Land Project Manager, Shaun Barclay together with Rangers Aaron Ketchell, Noel Baker and JCU researchers Ian Gynther, David Fell, Alastair Freeman and Justin Smith found many turtles still nesting on the island. 155 return tracks were recorded on the shoreline over the three days of the study.

They also managed to excavate and count 17 nests, in which 64 per cent of the eggs laid were fully developed and therefore able to become hatchlings and successfully leave the nest to make their way to the water.

The survey team constructed trenches on key areas of the islands shoreline to monitor and record hatchlings to find out how many made their way to the water over a measured distance and time.

Using the figures captured from the 80 meter sample trench line, the team estimated that on average, 290 hatchlings per hour successfully reach the water off Maizub Kaur.

ENDS

TSRA Media Contact – Bruce Nelson 0423 403 449



Clutch Excavation - Aaron Ketchell, Justin Smith and Noel Baker.



Green Turtle Hatchling



Green Turtle Hatchling



Green Turtle - Juvenile Resting