

## Media Release No.526

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### **RANGERS BATTLE TO ERADICATE INVASIVE LEUCAENA WEED ON UGAR**

Rangers from the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Land and Sea Management Unit (LSMU) have completed another round in their ongoing battle to eradicate the invasive weed Leucaena on Ugar Island.

The TSRA Chairman, Mr Joseph Elu, said the eradication effort demonstrated the value of the Rangers and their skills.

“This is the second Leucaena eradication effort at Ugar in the past year and involved Rangers from Ugar, Masig, Iama, Warraber and Mer.

“The Rangers’ array of skills were on display and the week was a great success with strong support from Traditional Owners and warm hospitality from the Ugar community,” he said.

Skills used during the eradication included mapping, operational planning, chainsaw and chemical handling, workplace health and safety and communication.

The teams cut a substantial quantity of Leucaena at two sites on the island and retained the trunks of the trees for future community gatherings.

The Banksia Foundation Award Manager, Ms Kate Aubrey, visited Ugar to record the activity following the LSMU’s recent wins in two major categories of the national awards.

The LSMU won a Gold Banksia for the most outstanding performance in the six major award categories and the coveted Banksia Sustainability Award for the community-based management approach to protecting the region's unique island and marine biodiversity, cultural values and customary knowledge.

Leucaena is a fast-growing tree native to southern Mexico and northern Central America but is now prevalent throughout the tropics.

The weed forms dense thickets that smother other plants.



Caption: The work team – TSRA Rangers Troy Stow, Richard Kepa, Loice Naawi, Noel Baker, Laura Pearson, Ned David, Mark Pearson



Caption: – The Banksia Foundation’s, Ms Kate Aubrey, and TSRA Environmental Management Portfolio Member, Mr Willie Lui, talking to the Rangers about the awards

**ENDS**

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