

















Key Value	Theme	Brief description/overview of the key value
 <i>Ailan Kastom</i> , Aboriginal Lore/Law, cultural heritage and enduring connection to land and sea	People	The cultural identity of Torres Strait’s traditional inhabitants is expressed and maintained through <i>Ailan Kastom</i> (Island Custom) and Aboriginal Lore/Law. Maintaining and strengthening <i>Ailan Kastom</i> and Aboriginal Lore/Law is a central part of daily life and underpins the community’s capacity to sustainably manage land and sea resources into the future.
 Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)	People	Land and sea management in the Torres Strait has been a natural way of life for thousands of years and has been carried out in line with cultural protocols and the benefit of acquired knowledge and experience which has and continues to be passed down through generations.
 Scientific research and monitoring	People	The results of western scientific research and monitoring activity is a valuable addition to Traditional Ecological Knowledge when making decisions and undertaking land and sea management activities. The quality and quantity of scientific knowledge about the region has grown significantly over recent decades.
 Strong regional and community-based management capacity	People	The region has a proud record of developing and implementing community-based planning and management approaches, acknowledging the critical role of communities in acting as local custodians of their environmental assets, integrating western and customary knowledge in management arrangements, as well as empowering communities in decision-making and priority setting.
 Healthy sea ecosystems	Sea	The unique diversity of all marine plants, animals, habitats and natural processes that keep marine ecosystems in the region healthy.
 Marine water quality	Sea	High quality marine water and oceanic processes supporting healthy marine ecosystems and sustainable Torres Strait communities and traditional practices.
 Coral reefs	Sea	A coral reef biodiversity hotspot with over 1200 coral reefs comprising the northern extent of the World Heritage Listed Great Barrier Reef.
 Seagrass meadows	Sea	Extensive and important seagrass habitat – among the largest continuous meadows globally – fundamental to the health of all Torres Strait ecological and cultural communities.
 Dugong	Sea	With an estimated population of about 12,000, the Torres Strait is the dugong capital of the world. Dugongs are of immense practical, economic, cultural and spiritual significance to Indigenous peoples of the region.
 Marine turtles	Sea	Second perhaps only to dugong, marine turtles are an important part of the natural and cultural landscape of the Torres Strait with six of the world’s seven species of marine turtle found in the region.
 Subsistence fishing	Sea	Traditional subsistence hunting, fishing and collecting for cultural, community and personal purposes is central to the Torres Strait way of life and managed under regional and community based arrangements.
 Healthy land ecosystems	Land	The unique diversity of all land plants, animals, habitats and natural processes that keep land ecosystems in the region healthy.
 Sustainable human settlements	Land	The 17 inhabited islands and the 18 Indigenous communities that support continuing connection to traditional homelands in the face of climate change risks.
 Coasts and beaches	Land	Including 650 km of vital and mostly pristine coastline that is central to all life in the Torres Strait.
 Mangroves and wetlands	Land	The large and internationally significant mangrove forests and associated tidal and freshwater wetlands.
 Coastal birds	Land	More than 240 coastal bird species rely on the Torres Strait for all or part of their life cycle (including many internationally significant species).