Climate on Country Report



Pre-Start Meeting, Safety Talks & Welcome to Country

Before activities commenced on both days, boarders participated in a pre-start meeting and safety talk. Staff outlined expectations for the day, including looking after one another, respecting Country, staying with the group, following instructions and being aware of hazards while moving through the coastal, mangrove and rocky environments.

The program then began with a Welcome to Country, setting the tone for the **Climate on Country** Challenge and reinforcing the importance of respect for Country, culture and community before undertaking the day's learning and activities.

Climate Impacts – Boarder Discussion

Boarders were invited to share the climate impacts they are already seeing on their home islands across the Torres Strait. Their observations included storm surge, increasingly high tides, coastal erosion and concerns about islands sinking or losing land. These discussions made the learning relevant and personal, connecting climate change with changes the boarders are witnessing in their own communities.

The group also discussed how communities are responding to these impacts. Boarders identified practical responses including building rock walls, community consultation, and working together with other organisations to plan, support and deliver solutions. The conversation highlighted that responding to climate impacts requires local knowledge, community involvement, cooperation and shared responsibility.

Camp Objective

The objective of the **Climate on Country** Challenge was to increase boarders' awareness and understanding of climate impacts affecting the Torres Strait, while encouraging them to show initiative and take a leadership role in protecting Country. Through discussion, learning on Country and practical environmental action, the program aimed to help boarders recognise that young people can contribute to solutions, influence positive change and take responsibility for caring for their communities and environment.

Case Study Context - Supporting Community-Led Climate Adaptation in the Torres Strait

In September 2026, Gur A Baradharaw Kod Torres Strait Sea and Land Council (GBK) delivered a range of climate adaptation initiatives through its Climate Resilience Project. These activities were supported by the Australian Government's Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area Climate Resilience Grant Program, a key component of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area Climate Resilience Centre.

As part of this wider work, the **Climate on Country** youth camp was delivered in partnership with Kaziw Meta, alongside community engagement activities on Waraber and Boigu Islands. These initiatives brought together Traditional Owners, Elders, community members and young people to share knowledge, identify climate risks and explore practical actions to strengthen resilience.

The youth camp provided opportunities for young people to learn on Country through hands-on activities focused on coastal environments, Sea Country and climate resilience. By combining Torres Strait Islander knowledge with climate science, the camp helped build understanding of climate change and supported the next generation of community climate leaders.

The broader project also supports the development of locally led Climate Adaptation Plans on Waraber and Boigu Islands. Through workshops and discussions, communities are identifying local climate risks and priorities and shaping adaptation actions that reflect community aspirations and cultural values. These pilot plans will help inform future climate adaptation planning across the Torres Strait.

This work demonstrates a First Nations-led approach to climate adaptation, placing Traditional Owner leadership, local knowledge and community decision-making at its centre. It also reflects the National Adaptation Plan's focus on place-based adaptation that protects culture, Country and livelihoods in a changing climate.

Case study information supplied for the **Climate on Country** Report by GBK.

Event Overview

Climate on Country was the central focus of the weekend: learning directly from the Bampfield Head environment, recognizing climate impacts already affecting Torres Strait communities, and turning that learning into practical action through Caring for Country.

Over the weekend of Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th September 2026, Torres Strait Kaziw Meta boarders participated in the **Climate on Country** Challenge at Bampfield Head on Prince of Wales Island. The boys attended on Saturday, followed by the girls on Sunday.

The weekend provided boarders with an opportunity to step outside the traditional classroom environment and learn directly on Country. The program combined practical conservation, environmental awareness, teamwork, Ranger-style field learning, recreation and wellbeing, using the Bampfield Head coastal environment as the learning space. This camp was supported by two TSIRC Climate Resilience Officers.

Across both days, boarders were encouraged to explore, discover, learn and have fun while developing a greater understanding of the importance of looking after Country, respecting the environment and contributing positively to the community.

Learning on Country

A major focus of the weekend was giving boarders the opportunity to experience the environment firsthand. Boarders moved through coastal areas, observed habitats, explored mangroves and tidal areas, and discussed the impacts of climate change and the connections between land, sea, wildlife and people.



Mangrove ecosystem at Bampfield Head.



Boarders exploring the shallow coastal environment at Bampfield Head.

The hands-on approach encouraged curiosity, teamwork and respectful interaction with Country. Rather than learning only in a classroom, boarders were able to see, discuss and experience the environment for themselves.

Mangrove, Coastal & Wildlife Exploration

Boarders explored sections of the mangrove and coastal environment, observing the different features that make these habitats unique. The activities encouraged boarders to look closely at mangrove roots, tidal areas, animal signs, vegetation and evidence of environmental impacts such as erosion, rising tide levels and high levels of rubbish.



Learning on Country through hands-on coastal exploration.



Wildlife observed in its natural habitat at Bampfield Head.

Wildlife observations created valuable opportunities to discuss the relationship between animals, habitat, vegetation and healthy Country. Boarders were encouraged to observe wildlife respectfully from a safe distance and to consider how protecting habitat supports the animals that depend on these environments.

Environmental Responsibility

The **Climate on Country** Challenge reinforced that Caring for Country is not only about learning about the environment - it is also about taking responsibility and acting on what we learn. This message became especially clear through the environmental clean-up completed by both groups.



Boarders working together to collect rubbish and protect our coastal environments.

Saturday - Boys Climate on Country Experience

Caring for Country & Community Clean-Up

A major activity for the boys on Saturday was the environmental clean-up around Bampfield Head. The boys worked alongside staff and supporting adults to collect rubbish from the coastline and surrounding areas. Large bags were filled with waste that had accumulated throughout the environment.



Working together - rubbish being collected and removed from the Bampfield Head coastline.

The amount collected provided a strong visual reminder of the impact rubbish can have on coastal environments. The activity gave the boys an opportunity to make an immediate and practical contribution to Caring for Country while promoting teamwork, leadership, environmental awareness, and community responsibility.



Saturday - the boys and supporting adults with the rubbish collected during the Bampfield Head clean-up.

Saturday - Fishing, Connection & Wellbeing

Following the environmental activities, the boys spent time fishing along the rocky coastline at Bampfield Head. Fishing provided an enjoyable opportunity for the boarders to connect with the surrounding marine environment while spending positive time together.



Saturday - Kaziw Meta boys enjoying fishing from the rocks at Bampfield Head.

The weekend was also about creating positive opportunities for boarders and staff to connect. During breaks, boarders were able to sit together, enjoy meals, play music and relax. These informal moments supported positive relationships and contributed to the overall wellbeing focus of the weekend.



Saturday - boarders and staff enjoying lunch, music and time together.

Sunday - Girls Climate on Country Experience

Caring for Country & Community Clean-Up

On Sunday, the girls continued the environmental focus of the weekend by undertaking their own clean-up around Bampfield Head. Working together, the girls collected several large bags of rubbish from the surrounding area.



Sunday - Kaziw Meta girls proudly displaying the rubbish collected from Bampfield Head.

The activity gave the girls an opportunity to put the message of Caring for Country into action while making a visible contribution to protecting the environment and giving back to the community. The clean-up encouraged teamwork, leadership, environmental responsibility and community pride.

Sunday - Fishing, Outdoor Skills & Enjoying Country

The girls also enjoyed fishing along the rocky coastline during Sunday's program. Fishing provided a relaxed and enjoyable opportunity to connect with Country and the surrounding marine environment while strengthening positive relationships with one another.



Sunday - girls fishing along the Bampfield Head coastline.



Sunday - girls proudly showing the small fire they worked together to build.

Another activity enjoyed by the girls was working together to build and safely maintain a small outdoor fire. The activity encouraged practical outdoor skills, communication, confidence and teamwork.

Some of our boarders took the opportunity to hunt and gather foods found on country and cook on a small camp fire and share as a group.



*Kaziw Meta boarders enjoying time together in the water during Sunday's **Climate on Country** experience.*

Recreational moments were an important part of the weekend and supported positive relationships, social connection and wellbeing. The opportunity to swim, explore and enjoy the surroundings helped demonstrate that learning about Country can be both meaningful and enjoyable.

It was wonderful to see all our senior boarding girls taking the opportunity to guide and support our younger girls assisting and completing tasks.

Climate on Country Challenge & Recognition

Alongside the practical activities, the **Climate on Country** program encouraged boarders to think about mangrove ecosystems, tidal environments, water quality, wildlife, marine debris and the responsibility involved in Caring for Country. The 30-question **Climate on Country** Challenge was designed to reinforce this learning and connect the practical field experience with structured reflection.

Recognition & Appreciation

At the conclusion of the activities, participating boarders were recognised for the contribution they had made throughout the **Climate on Country** Challenge. Every boarder who participated received a Salty Monkey hat as a token of appreciation for their hard work in helping clean up and protect the Bampfield Head environment.



Boarders being individually presented with Salty Monkey hats.



Recognition of boarders for their hard work and contribution to the clean-up.

The presentation reinforced that their effort, teamwork and willingness to give back to the community had been noticed and valued. The hats also provided boarders with something to take home as a reminder of the role they played in helping leave Bampfield Head cleaner than they found it.

Certificate of Recognition



Certificate presented in recognition of participation, commitment and leadership in the **Climate on Country** Challenge.

A Visible Result - Rubbish Removed from Bampfield Head

The environmental clean-up produced a very visible result across the two days. The rubbish collected by the boarders was gathered into large bags and loaded into the Kaziw Meta vehicle after the Bampfield Head activities. This final step reinforced that the work completed on Country had a real outcome and that the boarders had made a practical contribution to leaving the area cleaner than they found it.

A huge thankyou was made to the staff and students by the captain on the Time and Tide vessel who is also an Elder from that part of the country. He said, “It is amazing to see Bampfield Head look so clean and tidy, well done to everyone”. He also stated he looks forward to the future of working alongside the staff and boarders of Torres Strait Kaziw Meta.



*Rubbish collected during the **Climate on Country** weekend loaded into the Kaziw Meta vehicle after the Bampfield Head clean-up.*

For the boarders, seeing the collected rubbish together helped show the scale of what can be achieved through teamwork. It also provided a strong conclusion to the environmental component of the weekend - moving from learning about the impact of waste, to collecting it, and then seeing the result of their combined effort.

TORRES STRAIT KAZIW META CLIMATE ON COUNTRY CHALLENGE

EXPLORE • DISCOVER • LEARN • HAVE FUN!

Work together as a team to find the answers and complete the collection challenges!

Name: _____ Team: _____

1. Before starting fieldwork, what should a team do first?
- **A.** Run straight to the beach
- **B.** Complete the safety and site briefing
- **C.** Start collecting animals
- **D.** Separate from the group

2. What is the safest response to a needle or unknown chemical container found during a clean-up?
- **A.** Pick it up with bare hands
- **B.** Kick it away
- **C.** Leave it, keep others clear and tell staff
- **D.** Put it in your pocket

3. Why are closed shoes useful during coastal fieldwork?
- **A.** They make you run faster
- **B.** They help protect feet from cuts and sharp objects
- **C.** They keep the tide out
- **D.** They identify your team

4. Why should teams keep checking tides and conditions?
- **A.** Tidal areas can change and access may become unsafe
- **B.** It changes the colour of rubbish
- **C.** It makes mangroves grow instantly
- **D.** It tells you your quiz score

5. What is good fieldwork behaviour around wildlife?
- **A.** Chase animals for a closer photo
- **B.** Observe quietly and avoid unnecessary disturbance
- **C.** Dig up every burrow
- **D.** Feed wildlife lunch scraps

6. Mangroves are especially adapted to live in areas affected by:
- **A.** Snow and ice
- **B.** Tides and salty/brackish water
- **C.** Desert dunes only
- **D.** Freshwater dams only

7. One important job mangrove roots can do is:
- **A.** Help trap sediment and stabilise shorelines
- **B.** Create plastic waste
- **C.** Heat the seawater
- **D.** Stop all tides

8. Mangrove habitats can provide shelter and nursery areas for:
- **A.** Fish and crustaceans
- **B.** Only domestic animals
- **C.** Only insects
- **D.** No animals

9. Why should mangrove seedlings and roots be protected during a survey?
- **A.** Damage can affect habitat and regeneration
- **B.** They are made of plastic
- **C.** They make water salty
- **D.** They are rubbish

10. Which is the best sign to record in a mangrove survey?
- **A.** Roots, seedlings, animal signs and rubbish
- **B.** Only your team name
- **C.** Only the weather forecast from last week
- **D.** Nothing unless you catch an animal

11. Mud crabs are most closely associated with which environment?
- **A.** Mangroves, estuaries and tidal areas
- **B.** Dry mountain tops
- **C.** Fresh snowfields
- **D.** Open desert

12. A crab burrow is useful field evidence because it can show:
- **A.** Animal activity in the habitat
- **B.** The exact age of the beach
- **C.** That there are no tides
- **D.** That all rubbish is harmless

13. What is the best way to survey a mud crab burrow for this challenge?
- **A.** Dig it out
- **B.** Pour rubbish into it
- **C.** Observe and record it without unnecessary disturbance
- **D.** Block the entrance

14. Tidal flats are important because they can provide:
- **A.** Feeding and habitat areas for many species
- **B.** Only parking space
- **C.** No ecological value
- **D.** Fresh drinking water everywhere

15. If one part of a food web is damaged, what can happen?
- **A.** Other species can also be affected
- **B.** Nothing can ever change
- **C.** All rubbish disappears
- **D.** Tides stop moving

RESPECT COUNTRY • LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER • BE A LEADER

A STRONG TEAM • A STRONG FUTURE

TORRES STRAIT KAZIW META
CLIMATE ON COUNTRY
CHALLENGE

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Name: _____ **Team:** _____

16. What unit is commonly used to record water temperature?
- **A.** Degrees Celsius (°C)
- **B.** Kilograms
- **C.** Metres per second only
- **D.** Litres of rubbish

17. Why should you record the time and location with a water measurement?
- **A.** So results can be compared and understood in context
- **B.** To make the sheet longer
- **C.** Because temperature never changes
- **D.** To avoid using equipment

18. What does pH tell us about water?
- **A.** How acidic or alkaline it is
- **B.** How heavy the water is
- **C.** How many crabs live there
- **D.** How old the tide is

19. Salinity is a measure of:
- **A.** Salt concentration in water
- **B.** Air temperature
- **C.** Number of mangrove trees
- **D.** Weight of rubbish

20. Turbidity or water clarity is related to:
- **A.** How clear or cloudy the water is
- **B.** How loud the waves are
- **C.** How many staff are present
- **D.** The colour of team shirts

21. Why is marine plastic a problem?
- **A.** It can persist, break into smaller pieces and harm wildlife
- **B.** It becomes mangrove roots
- **C.** It always disappears overnight
- **D.** It improves all habitats

22. Fishing line, rope or net debris can be dangerous because animals may:
- **A.** Become entangled
- **B.** Use it as drinking water
- **C.** Turn it into sand immediately
- **D.** Always avoid it

23. Why sort rubbish into categories during a clean-up?
- **A.** To understand what types are most common and possible sources
- **B.** To make more rubbish
- **C.** To hide the results
- **D.** Because all debris has the same impact

24. Which action best helps prevent marine debris?
- **A.** Reduce waste, dispose of it properly and recover lost gear
- **B.** Leave rubbish above the high tide line
- **C.** Throw soft plastic into mangroves
- **D.** Burn unknown waste on the beach

25. Why weigh or count collected rubbish?
- **A.** It gives evidence that can be compared and reported
- **B.** It changes the tide
- **C.** It makes rubbish safer to touch
- **D.** It tells you the pH

26. FIELD QUESTION: What water-temperature range did your team record today?
- **A.** Below 20°C
- **B.** 20–24.9°C
- **C.** 25–29.9°C
- **D.** 30°C or above

27. FIELD QUESTION: Which debris category had the highest count in your team area?
- **A.** Hard plastic
- **B.** Soft plastic/wrappers
- **C.** Fishing-related debris
- **D.** Other – based on our tally

28. FIELD QUESTION: Which statement best matches your mangrove site today?
- **A.** We observed healthy features with little visible impact
- **B.** We observed some impact/rubbish but also living habitat
- **C.** We observed major visible impact/damage
- **D.** Our team did not inspect mangroves

29. FIELD QUESTION: How many mud crab holes/signs did your team record?
- **A.** 0
- **B.** 1–5
- **C.** 6–15
- **D.** 16 or more

30. FIELD QUESTION: Based on today, which action would most help care for Banfield?
- **A.** The action our team identified from evidence today
- **B.** Ignore rubbish because tides move it
- **C.** Disturb burrows to find animals
- **D.** Leave equipment and waste behind

RESPECT COUNTRY **LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER** **BE A LEADER**

A STRONG TEAM • A STRONG FUTURE



STAFF ANSWER KEY

Climate on Country Challenge • Staff use only

Q	ANSWER	Q	ANSWER	Q	ANSWER
1	B	11	A	21	A
2	C	12	A	22	A
3	B	13	C	23	A
4	A	14	A	24	A
5	B	15	A	25	A
6	B	16	A	26	FIELD RECORD
7	A	17	A	27	FIELD RECORD
8	A	18	A	28	FIELD RECORD
9	A	19	A	29	FIELD RECORD
10	A	20	A	30	A

SCORING GUIDE

- Questions 1–25: 1 point for each correct answer.
- Questions 26–29: match the team Field Record Sheet (no universal answer).
- Question 30: A.
- Maximum score: 30 points.



Outcomes & Benefits

The **Climate on Country** weekend provided a valuable combination of environmental education, practical experience, recreation, leadership, teamwork and wellbeing. Boarders were able to actively contribute to cleaning and protecting the Bampfield Head environment, develop a greater understanding of Caring for Country, explore coastal and marine environments, observe wildlife and natural habitats, work together, participate in fishing and outdoor activities, strengthen relationships and give back to the local community as well as developing their knowledge regarding climate impacts that are affecting their country.

WEEKEND HIGHLIGHT

The greatest success of the Climate on Country Challenge was seeing our boarders actively contributing to the care of the Bampfield Head environment. Across both Saturday and Sunday, the boys and girls worked together to remove a significant amount of rubbish while learning more about the coastal environment around them. The large bags of rubbish collected demonstrated the positive impact that can be achieved when young people are given an opportunity to take responsibility and contribute.

Just as importantly, the weekend created opportunities for boarders to connect with Country, connect with each other and connect with staff through fishing, environmental exploration, outdoor activities, swimming, meals and shared experiences. Boarders were not simply told why Country should be protected - they were given an opportunity to participate, contribute and make a difference themselves.



Bampfield Head- the coastal environment that provided the setting for a weekend of learning, contribution and connection.

Respect Country • Look After Each Other • Be a Leader