

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7, as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Note for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers are strongly urged to provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

01 March 2005

3. Country:

UK (Jersey)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Les Minquiers, Jersey

5. Map of site included:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps.

a) **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): yes -or- no

b) **digital (electronic) format** (optional): Yes

6. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

048 58 27 N

002 07 14 W

7. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

The site lies 34 km due south from the port of St Helier in the Channel Island of Jersey. The island is situated in the English Channel, 22.4 km west of Normandy (France) and 136 km south of Weymouth (England).

Administrative region: Jersey

8. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **9. Area** (hectares): 9575

Min. -15

Max. 15

Mean No information available

10. Overview:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

The site complex consists of an extensive shoal area approximately 16 km long and 11 km wide .At high tide only rocky heads and a small supralittoral area, La Maitresse Isle (which supports some small stone dwellings), are exposed. The tidal range can exceed 12 m. At low tide various habitats are exposed, including reefs, boulder fields, sandy shores and shingle banks The area is fed clean well-oxygenated water and this factor, together with the range of habitats and the site’s biogeographical position supports a wide range of rich and diverse biotopes and some unusual species assemblages. The flora and fauna is characterised by limit-of-range species at the northern and southern margins of their distributions which are not present on shores either to the north or south respectively. Fishing within the site is of great cultural, social and traditional importance to the population of Jersey.

11. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8

12. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 11. above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

1. The site has the one of the largest tidal ranges in the world, which can exceed 12 metres, and a wide range of substrata and wave exposure. Its waters are relatively warm due to the influence of the Gulf Stream and surrounding oceanographic conditions. Habitat-based evaluations using comparisons with the nearby South-East Coast of Jersey Ramsar site (designated 2000) indicate that due to the diverse range of habitats, communities and species the site has great ecological value which play a substantial ecological role in the natural functioning of the system

The extensive rocky intertidal areas in this site are of international importance because of the rarity and possible threats to this type of habitat and its associated communities. Situated in Le Golfe Normano-Breton, in the same region as the Baie de Mont St Michel (designated Ramsar site 1994), the site is part of the last vestiges of a former land bridge to continental Europe and plays a major role in the continued functioning of the Golfe.

2.The site is internationally important because it supports the following vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered species. The ecological community is unique

Bottlenosed Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bern appendix II • C.M.S appendix II • E.C Habitats Dir. Annex II, • CWJ Protected
Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bern appendix II • C.M.S appendix II • CWJ Protected
White Beaked Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bern appendix II • C.M.S appendix II • CWJ Protected
Risso's Dolphin	<i>Grampus griseus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C.M.S appendix II • Bern appendix II • CWJ Protected
Striped Dolphin	<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bern appendix II • CWJ Protected

Harbour Porpoise	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bern appendix II • C.M.S appendix II • E.C Habitats Dir. Annex II • CWJ Protected
Pilot Whale	<i>Globicephala melas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C.M.S appendix II • Bern appendix II • CWJ Protected
Atlantic Grey Seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.C Habitats Dir. Annex II
Basking Shark	<i>Cetorhinus maximus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUCN vulnerable • Bern appendix II
Atlantic Salmon	<i>Salmo salar</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.c Habitats Dir. Annex II
Common Sturgeon	<i>Acipenser sturio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUCN Red list • C.M.S appendix II • Bern appendix II
Short-Snouted Seahorse	<i>Hippocampus hippocampus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUCN Red list • Bern appendix II
Twait Shad	<i>Alosa fallax</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUCN Red list

CWJ=Conservation of Wildlife(Jersey) Law 2000 (as amended)

3. Jersey is situated in Le Golfe Normano-Breton between England and France on the boundary between the cold and warm temperate marine biogeographical regions. Overlap between these regions promotes increased species richness and provides assemblages which include species at the limits of their respective distributions. Species associated with warmer southern European waters such as ormer *Haliotis tuberculata* which are rare or absent from British coasts thus coexist with at those normally associated with colder northern waters such as the beadlet anemone *Actinia equina*. It has been hypothesised that such limit-of-range populations may eventually, through adaptation to local, more extreme environmental conditions than core populations undergo allopatric speciation which arises through reproductive isolation. Monitoring of these habitats for environmental change is therefore crucial (Taylor & Cook 1981). One of the largest breeding populations of bottlenose dolphins *Tursiops truncatus* in the British Isles are recorded in the area.

4. The Baie de St Malo experiences huge diurnal movements of relatively warm, closed waters moved by a residual inshore anti-clockwise current around Jersey. This enhances local recruitment of many species of planktonic larvae, especially Crustacea. The large rocky platforms are important to many invertebrate and vertebrate organisms, providing shelter, protection and food for both larval and adult stages. Likewise the rich infaunal communities of the mud and sand flats are important for their range of mollusc and worm species. These areas are important nursery zones for shore and shallow sublittoral fish communities. The wide shallow gullies dividing the rocky platforms also provide critical habitat for many other forms and stages of life as do the extensive and diverse algal assemblages. Different locations within the site support a number of species of wintering and passage waders and wildfowl with important feeding and roosting locations. The number of birds found within the site contribute to Jersey's nationally significant populations of three species which are *Phalacrocorax carbo*, *Sterna sandvicensis*, *Hydrobates pelagicus*

7. The areas of shallow water and the large number of intertidal pools within the site provide habitat for many species of fish. The South-East Coast of Jersey surveys recorded 107 marine fish species of which ten are of EU or UK importance and 34 priority marine invertebrates of which 14 are rare or scarce (UK). There is no reason to suppose that this site supports fewer. The enormous water exchanges, strong tidal streams, a wide variety of wave energy conditions and substrate variation provide ideal conditions for the support of a wide diversity of organisms. The combination of biogeographic location, oceanographic circulation and physical features enhances biodiversity. The site contributes to the biodiversity of the Golfe Normano-Breton and thence to the English Channel.

Among the most important fish species are *Acipenser sturio*, *Alosa alosa*, *Alosa fallax*, *Cetorhinus maximus*, *Gobius cobitus*, *Hippocampus hippocampus*, *Pomatoschistus microps*, *Pomatoschistus minutus*, *Salmo salar*

8. The topographical diversity of the site creates a range of sheltered areas which provide conditions favouring recruitment of planktonic larvae. Many species of fish feed and grow in the warm fertile shallows before commencing their autumn migration to spawn elsewhere. Conversely, other species winter in the area and leave during the summer. The site also provides habitat for the entire life cycle of many smaller marine organisms. This wide diversity provides feeding for dolphins and seabirds.

13. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) **biogeographic region:**
Atlantic

b) **biogeographic regionalisation scheme** (include reference citation):
EU Habitats Directive

14. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Soil & geology	Boulder, Clay, Gravel, Igneous, Mud, Peat, Sand, Shingle
Geomorphology and landscape	Cave/Tunnel, Intertidal rock, Intertidal sediments, Islands, Open coast, Pools, Subtidal rock, Subtidal sediments, Surge gullies
Nutrient status	
pH	
Salinity	saline / euhaline
Soil	
Water permanence	usually permanent
Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (Jersey, 1961–90) (www.gov.je/faqs.asp) Max. daily temperature: 17° C Min. daily temperature: 6° C Rainfall: 860 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1915.0 The climate of the region is temperate oceanic.

General description of the Physical Features:

The majority of the exposed rock can be termed a foliated granodiorite. It is probable that the area was part of a land bridge to continental Europe which was inundated at the end of the last Ice Age. At low tide rocky reefs, shingle and sand banks are exposed, together with sub-angular to sub-rounded boulders of all sizes, and sedimentary mud, sand and gravel. Underlying peat and clay beds are of likely archaeological significance. Exposed and sheltered rocky shores, rockpools, intertidal overhangs and caves are all present.

The site has the one of the largest tidal ranges in the world which can exceed 12 metres.

15. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

n/a

16. Hydrological values:

Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

Sediment trapping

17. Wetland types

Marine/coastal wetland

Code	Name	% Area
A	Shallow marine waters	70
B	Marine beds (e.g. sea grass beds)	-
D	Rocky shores	28
E	Sand / shingle shores (including dune systems)	2
G	Tidal flats	-

18. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site.

The site contains a diverse array of habitats and micro-habitats. Luxuriant growth of fucoid algae on intertidal rocky platforms, rockpools and gullies with a variety of algae, crustaceans and fish, intertidal channels with sponge and ascidian communities and some intertidal sediment communities all occur on the site.

19. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Intertidal rocky platforms bear luxuriant growth of fucoid algae. Stands of kelp *Laminaria* species also occur.

Intertidal rockpools contain dense colonies of the non-native alga *Sargassum muticum*, first recorded in Jersey in 1980.

20. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Species Information

Nationally important species include the molluscs *Modiolus modiolus*, *Haliotis tuberculata*, *Gibbula pennanti* and *Macra glauca*. Crabs include *Pisa tetraodon* and *Thia scutellata*.

The extensive areas of shallow water and huge numbers of intertidal pools found within the site provide habitat for many species of fish such as short-snouted seahorse *Hippocampus hippocampus* and giant goby *Gobius cobitis*.

21. Social and cultural values:

e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

Non-consumptive recreation
Sport fishing

Traditional cultural

22. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
National/Crown estate	+	

23. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site	Scale
Recreation	+		Small-scale
Fishing: commercial		+	Large-scale
Fishing: recreational/sport	+		Small-scale

24. Factors adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:*Explanation of reporting category:*

1. Those factors that are still operating, but it is unclear if they are under control, as there is a lag in showing the management or regulatory regime to be successful.
2. Those factors that are not currently being managed, or where the regulatory regime appears to have been ineffective so far.

None

25. Conservation measures taken:

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

Conservation measure	On-site	Off-site
Other	+	

Policy M1 of the Jersey Island Plan 2003 ensures the sustainable use of the Island's marine environment by the designation of a Marine Protection Zone extending from Mean High Water to the territorial limits, as designated on the Island and Town Proposals Maps. Within this zone there is a presumption against all developments except those which are essential for navigation, access to water, fishing and fish farming and coastal defence.

26. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.
Proposed site of special interest under the Planning (Jersey) Law 1964

27. Current scientific research and facilities:

e.g. details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

Difficulties in accessing the site and resource limitations currently preclude research.

28. Current conservation education:

e.g. visitor centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

An information booklet on the importance of Jersey's Ramsar site is available.

29. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

Low-level recreation by visitors from France and Jersey. The increase in these visits is a cause for concern, and negotiations are in progress to control this.

30. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept. of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

Bailiwick of Jersey,

Environment Department, Howard Davis Farm, Trinity Jersey, JE3 5JP

31. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

Principal Ecologist, States of Jersey, Environment Department, Howard Davis Farm, Trinity Jersey, JE3 5JP

32. Bibliographical references:

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 13 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Site-relevant references

- Anon. (1997) *Anthropogenic radionuclides in the region of Jersey*. Southampton Oceanography Centre, Geosciences Division, unpublished report to States of Jersey
- Bishop, AC & Bisson, G (eds.) (1989) *Jersey: description of 1:25,000 Channel Islands sheet 2*. HMSO, London, for British Geological Survey (Classical areas of British geology)
- Critchley, AT, Farnham, WF & Morrell, SL (1983) A chronology of new European sites of attachment for the invasive brown alga, *Sargassum muticum*, 1973–1981. *Journal of the Marine Biological Association*, **63**, 799-811
- Crutchley, S (1997) *Designation of a Marine Protected Area in Jersey: Recommendations with special reference to molluscs*. Unpublished MSc dissertation, University College London
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- Hiscock, K (ed.) (1996) *Marine Nature Conservation Review: rationale and methods*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough. (Coasts and Seas of the United Kingdom. MNCR series)
- Jewell, S (1995) *An identification and analysis of key criteria for the sustainable development of Jersey's coastal zone*. Unpublished MSc dissertation, Heriot-Watt University, Institute of Offshore Engineering, Edinburgh
- Kindleysides, D (1995) *Conserving the intertidal biodiversity of Jersey: a strategy*. Unpublished MSc dissertation, University College London
- Orbi, A & Salomon, J-C (1988) Dynamique de maree dans le Golfe Normand-Breton. *Oceanologica Acta*, **11**(1), 55-64
- Rodwell, WJ (1996) *Les Écréhous Jersey*. La Société Jersiaise, St Helier
- Taylor, PD & Cook, PL (1981) *Hippoporidra edax* (Busk, 1859) and a revision of some fossil and living *Hippoporidra* (Bryozoa). *Bulletin of the British Museum (Natural History) (Geology)*, **35**, 243-251
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