



# Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 10 April 2024

Update version, previously published on : 2 February 2005

## United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Crown dependencies)

Les Minquiers, Jersey



Designation date	2 February 2005
Site number	1456
Coordinates	48°58'23"N 02°07'19"W
Area	9 575,00 ha

<https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/1456>

Created by RSIS V.1.6 on - 10 April 2024

## Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a 'full' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

## 1 - Summary

### Summary

The Les Minquiers Ramsar Site consists of an extensive near-natural reef system. It is fed by clean, well-oxygenated water from the western English Channel and has a tidal range that can exceed 13 m. At high tide only a group of rocky heads and an islet remain uncovered. At low tide a complex network of intertidal habitats is exposed, including reefs, boulder fields, sandy shores and shingle banks.

The site is rich in biodiversity. It supports over 40 different biotope types and around 600 marine species have been recorded. There are extensive areas of Kelp forest and subtidal Seagrass beds. Shallow waters and intertidal pools provide habitat and act as a nursery area to a wide range of fish and invertebrate species, including commercial species such as crabs and lobsters. The cold-water reef is characterised by limit-of-range species that are scarce or not present on shores further north or south. Some species are regionally scarce and/or listed as vulnerable by the IUCN, including the Green ormer *Haliotis tuberculata* and Pink sea-fan *Eunicella verrucosa*. The site supports a small breeding population of Grey seal *Halichoerus grypus* and one of the largest breeding populations of Bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* in the British Isles. It also provides feeding and roosting locations for passage and wintering waders and wildfowl, and there are several notable nesting bird colonies.

The area provides multiple ecosystem services. It is frequently used for recreational fishing, especially potting, low water fishing and angling, and supports an important commercial fishery for various mixed shellfish and wetfish. General recreational boating is popular and tours and commercial wildlife watching trips are provided. Habitats and topographical features provide many aspects of environmental resilience and multiple ecosystem services, including erosion control and the provision of shelter banks; storage, recycling, processing and acquisition of nutrients and carbon; biochemical and pollution regulation; and the provision of nursery and fisheries functions. The main threats are posed by dredging; over-fishing and harvesting of other aquatic resources; erosion and disturbance of breeding bird species from recreation and tourism; invasive non-native species; and climate change.

## 2 - Data & location

### 2.1 - Formal data

#### 2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

##### Responsible compiler

Institution/agency	Department of the Environment, Government of Jersey
Postal address	Howard Davis Farm Trinity Jersey JE3 5JP

##### National Ramsar Administrative Authority

Institution/agency	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Postal address	2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF

#### 2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year	2010
To year	2023

#### 2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)	Les Minquiers, Jersey
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#### 2.1.4 - Changes to the boundaries and area of the Site since its designation or earlier update

(Update) A. Changes to Site boundary	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>
(Update) B. Changes to Site area	No change to area
(Update) For secretariat only: This update is an extension	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 2.1.5 - Changes to the ecological character of the Site

(Update) 6b i. Has the ecological character of the Ramsar Site (including applicable Criteria) changed since the previous RIS?	No
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## 2.2 - Site location

### 2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image  
<1 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps	0
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##### Boundaries description

The geographic coordinates for the centre point of the site are 48°58.23"N 2°07.20"W. It is located about 25 km south of the island of Jersey and 15 km west of the coast of France.

### 2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?	Bailiwick of Jersey, Channel Islands
b) What is the nearest town or population centre?	St Helier, Jersey

### 2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>
b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>

## 2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha):

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries

## 2.2.5 - Biogeography

### Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW)	South European Atlantic Shelf
Other scheme (provide name below)	Atlantic Ocean

### Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

The site falls within the Atlantic Ocean biogeographic region of Europe as defined by the European Environment Agency.

### 3 - Why is the Site important?

#### 3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

Criterion 1: Representative, rare or unique natural or near-natural wetland types

Hydrological services provided	See section 4.5
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Other ecosystem services provided	See section 4.5
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Other reasons	Les Minquiers is an internationally important example of a large, near-natural, coastal ecosystem. It is representative of the European Atlantic marine ecoregion and has one of the largest tidal ranges in the world. In addition to the cold-water reefs and extensive areas of Kelp forest, the site includes areas of subtidal Seagrass, boulder fields, sandy shores, shingle banks, and a group of rocky outcrops. It supports over 40 different biotopes according to regional classifications (JNCC/EUNIS).
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Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification	The site is rich in biodiversity. It supports a wide range of subtidal, tidal and coastal habitats (see Criterion 1), and has 613 recorded marine species (including 171 marine macro algae), 92 recorded bird species, and around 102 species of terrestrial plants, lichens, algae and invertebrates (some of which are transitory).
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Justification	There are extensive areas of shallow water habitat and intertidal pools, which provide habitat and act as a nursery area to a wide range of fish and invertebrate species, including commercial species such as crabs and lobsters. The cold-water reefs host a high diversity of life and provide an edge of range habitat, where many southern and northern European marine species are at the limits of their thermal tolerance. Thus, species such as the Green ormer <i>Haliotis tuberculata</i> , which are associated with warmer southern European waters and are rare or absent from British coasts, coexist with those normally associated with colder northern waters, such as the Beadlet anemone <i>Actinia equina</i> . A small number of species are listed as vulnerable under IUCN criteria or are regionally scarce, including the Pink sea-fan <i>Eunicella verrucosa</i> , Five shilling shell <i>Maetra glauca</i> and Sunset cup-coral <i>Leptopsammia pruvoti</i> .
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Justification	The site and surrounding area also support a breeding small population of Grey seal <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> and one of the largest breeding populations of Bottlenose dolphin <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> in the British Isles. Other cetaceans frequenting the site include Common dolphin <i>Delphinus delphis</i> and Harbour porpoise <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> .
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Justification	The site is also important for various bird species. It provides feeding and roosting locations for various passage and wintering wader and wildfowl species. Birds that contribute to nationally significant populations of birds on the island of Jersey include Common tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> , European Shag <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i> , Great black-backed gull <i>Larus marinus</i> and Great cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> . Seabirds have been in decline across western Europe in recent decades and this pattern is also seen on the reefs around Jersey. The need to safeguard these communities before they merit listing as vulnerable on the IUCN Red List is as important as protecting the few species already in this state.
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Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions

The site provides support for the critical life stages of many organisms. It is situated in the Normano Breton Gulf, which 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.

Optional text box to provide further information

The large rocky platforms within the site 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. In turn, these areas form important nursery zones for shore birds and shallow sublittoral fish communities. Wide shallow gullies dividing the rocky platforms also provide critical habitat for many other forms and stages of marine life, as do the extensive and diverse algal assemblages.

Different locations within the site support many species of wintering and migratory waders and wildfowl with important feeding and roosting locations. There are also several notable nesting bird colonies, including Common tern *Sterna hirundo*, European shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*, Great black-backed gull *Larus marinus* and Great cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, together with a small breeding Grey seal *Halichoerus grypus* population, and one of the largest breeding Bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* populations in the British Isles.

End year 0

Criterion 8 : Fish spawning grounds, etc.

Justification

The site contains large areas of key habitat associated with the life stages of many species of fish and shellfish. Notable subtidal habitats include kelp forests, seagrass beds, Sandmason worm beds and vegetated shallow marine areas. The species that is most frequently cited as breeding within the reef is the Green ormer *Haliotis tuberculata*. In addition, European seabass *Dicentrarchus labrax* use the site during the spawning and nursery stages of their life cycle; Black seabream *Spondyliosoma cantharus* juveniles also use it as a nursery, particularly the seagrass habitat, and adults of this species are likely to spawn on the north-west of the reef edge; Porbeagle shark *Lamna nasus* is believed to breed on western edge of reef; and it is likely that many other species typical of the regional waters utilize the site, such as Allis shad *Allosa alosa*, Twaite shad *Alosa fallax*, Giant goby *Gobius cobitis*, Short-snouted seahorse *Hippocampus hippocampus*, Common goby *Pomatoschistus microps*, and Sand goby *Pomatoschistus minutus*. Commercial invertebrates, such as King scallop, lobster, cuttlefish and various crab species, are also known to breed in the area.

### 3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	Other status	Justification
Plantae								
TRACHEOPHYTA/ LILIOPSIDA	<i>Zostera marina</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	OSPAR list of threatened and/or declining habitats	Limited areas of seagrass <i>Zostera marina</i> occur within the reefs at the site; such beds are important as nursery areas for marine life and are internationally regarded as key habitats associated with biological diversity and environmental resilience

### 3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
<b>Others</b>																	
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	30	2021		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Important component of biodiversity, protected species on Jersey
CNIDARIA / ANTHOZOA	<i>Eunicella verrucosa</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	300	2018		VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Important component of biodiversity, regionally scarce species, listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red list, protected species on Jersey
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	15	2021		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Important component of biodiversity, notable breeding species, protected species on Jersey
CNIDARIA / ANTHOZOA	<i>Leptopsammia pruvoti</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Important component of biodiversity, regionally scarce species, protected species on Jersey
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Important component of biodiversity, protected species on Jersey
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	225	2021		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Important component of biodiversity, notable breeding species, protected species on Jersey
<b>Fish, Mollusc and Crustacea</b>																	
CHORDATA / ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Alosa alosa</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Notable breeding fish species, protected species on Jersey
CHORDATA / ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Alosa fallax</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Notable breeding fish species, protected species on Jersey
CHORDATA / ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Notable breeding fish species
CHORDATA / ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Gobius cobitis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Notable breeding fish species
MOLLUSCA / GASTROPODA	<i>Haliotis tuberculata</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	30000	2022		VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the (Jersey) Ormer fishing and possession regulations	Important component of biodiversity, listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red list, notable breeding shellfish species
CHORDATA / ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Hippocampus hippocampus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				DD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Notable breeding fish species, protected species on Jersey
ARTHROPODA / MALACOSTRACA	<i>Homarus gammarus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Notable breeding crustacean species
CHORDATA / ELASMOBRANCHII	<i>Lamna nasus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Notable breeding fish species, protected species on Jersey
MOLLUSCA / BIVALVIA	<i>Macra glauca</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	300	2016			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Important component of biodiversity, regionally scarce species, protected species on Jersey
MOLLUSCA / BIVALVIA	<i>Pecten maximus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Notable breeding shellfish species
CHORDATA / ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Pomatoschistus microps</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Notable breeding fish species
CHORDATA / ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Pomatoschistus minutus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Notable breeding fish species
MOLLUSCA / CEPHALOPODA	<i>Sepia officinalis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Notable breeding fish species
CHORDATA / ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Spondyliosoma cantharus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Notable breeding fish species
<b>Birds</b>																	



Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Larus marinus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25	2022		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021	Important component of biodiversity, notable breeding species, protected species (including breeding and resting sites) on Jersey
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25	2022			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021, listed on Jersey Birds of Conservation Concern (2011), listed as Species of European Concern	Important component of biodiversity, notable breeding species, protected species (including breeding and resting sites) and Red Listed on Jersey
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25	2022		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021, listed on Jersey Birds of Conservation Concern (2011), listed as Species of European Concern	Important component of biodiversity, notable breeding species, protected species (including breeding and resting sites) and Red Listed on Jersey
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	150	2022		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021, listed on Jersey Birds of Conservation Concern (2011)	Important component of biodiversity, notable breeding species, protected species (including breeding and resting sites) and Red Listed on Jersey

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

The population size for Bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* and Grey Seal *Halichoerus grypus* are approximate. Sunset cup-coral *Leptopsammia pruvoti* and Five shilling shell *Maetra glauca* are known only from single locations within the site; Pink Sea-fan *Eunicella verrucosa* is common on rocky surfaces below 20 m depth. Green ormer *Haliotis tuberculata* is at the northern end of its range on Jersey, has been heavily exploited across southern Europe and in past decades has also suffered from significant disease episodes. The population sizes for breeding birds are approximate and highly vulnerable to disturbance from rising tourist numbers during the breeding season.

### 3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Name of ecological community	Community qualifies under Criterion 2?	Description	Justification
Seagrass/ <i>Zostera</i> beds	<input type="checkbox"/>	See below	See below
Kelp forests	<input type="checkbox"/>	See below	See below
Coastal vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/>	See below	See below

Optional text box to provide further information

The site includes at least 1050 ha of Kelp forests (EUNIS habitat type A3.211/A3.1151) and several beds of Seagrass *Zostera marina* (EUNIS habitat type A5.5331) covering 30 ha. These are important as nursery areas for marine life, associated biodiversity and environmental resilience. The terrestrial part of the site supports a restricted coastal flora and also provides an area for nesting seabirds.

## 4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

### 4.1 - Ecological character

The site is predominantly formed of intertidal and shallow marine habitats, with only a small supralittoral component (0.01 ha) located on the reef islets. It includes a large reef system, within an extensive shoal area 21 km<sup>2</sup> in size. These are geographically isolated and do not suffer from issues associated with pollution, overdevelopment or overfishing. They are fed by clean and well-oxygenated water from the western English Channel, which are relatively warm waters due to the influence of the Gulf Stream and surrounding oceanographic conditions. The flora and fauna are 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.

The tidal range can exceed 13 m. At high tide, only small groups of rocky heads and an islet (Maître île) are exposed. At low tide a complex network of intertidal habitats is exposed, including rocky reefs, sandy shores and shingle banks, together with boulders of all sizes and sedimentary mud, sand and gravel. Exposed and sheltered rocky shores, rockpools, intertidal overhangs and caves are all present. Intertidal rocky platforms bear luxuriant growth of fucoid algae. Stands of Kelp are extensive and intertidal channels support sponge and ascidian communities. Intertidal rockpools contain dense colonies of the non-native alga *Sargassum muticum*, which were first recorded in Jersey in 1980.

The marine habitats are in good or very good health and support a wide range of ecosystem services and functions. This includes a fishing industry that is based on static gear; mobile fishing gear has been excluded from 47.56 km<sup>2</sup> of the reef since 2017. Les Minquiers is regarded as a biodiversity hotspot and probable nursery area for a range of species; it is also thought to play an important role in offering biological resilience to the wider Normano-Breton Gulf.

See Chambers, Binney and Jeffreys (2016) for further information.

### 4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

#### Marine or coastal wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
A: Permanent shallow marine waters	Includes EUNIS types A5.133/137/231	2	1900	Representative
B: Marine subtidal aquatic beds (Underwater vegetation)	Includes EUNIS types A3.12/125/211/214/222/223/2231/315/713, A4.13, A5.52/5331	1	5700	Representative
D: Rocky marine shores	Includes EUNIS types A1.1131/1133/125/212/214/215/313/3132/3142/3152/4121/451, B3.111 B3.113	3	500	Representative
E: Sand, shingle or pebble shores	Includes EUNIS types A1.413/4131, A2.111/211/224/225/226/421	4	400	Representative
Ga: Bivalve (shell-fish) reefs	Includes EUNIS type A5.433	3	1000	Representative

#### Other non-wetland habitat

Other non-wetland habitats within the site	Area (ha) if known
Concrete/sea walls/fisherman's huts	0.2
Marine waters >6m deep (includes EUNIS type A5.141)	100

### 4.3 - Biological components

#### 4.3.1 - Plant species

##### Other noteworthy plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Position in range / endemism / other
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Malva arborea</i>	See below

##### Invasive alien plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Impacts	Changes at RIS update
RHODOPHYTA/FLORIDOPHYCEAE	<i>Asparagopsis armata</i>	Actual (minor impacts)	increase
RHODOPHYTA/FLORIDOPHYCEAE	<i>Grateloupia subpectinata</i>	Actual (minor impacts)	increase
RHODOPHYTA/FLORIDOPHYCEAE	<i>Grateloupia turuturu</i>	Actual (major impacts)	No change
OCHROPHYTA/PHAEOPHYCEAE	<i>Sargassum muticum</i>	Actual (major impacts)	No change

##### Optional text box to provide further information

Tree mallow *Malva arborea* dominates the area on one of the islets that is covered by soil, providing protection against erosion and food/shelter for animals. *Sargassum muticum* has taken extensive hold of much of the lower intertidal pools and shallow subtidal areas regionally; growing up to 5m long with a significant mass of small brown leaves and pods its positive buoyancy can cause both shading and heating of the waters below it.

### 4.3.2 - Animal species

Invasive alien animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Impacts	Changes at RIS update
ARTHROPODA/MAXILLOPODA	<i>Austrominius modestus</i>	Actual (minor impacts)	No change
MOLLUSCA/GASTROPODA	<i>Crepidula fornicata</i>	Actual (major impacts)	increase
MOLLUSCA/BIVALVIA	<i>Magallana gigas</i>	Potential	increase
CHORDATA/ASCIDIACEA	<i>Styela clava</i>	Actual (minor impacts)	increase

Optional text box to provide further information

Crepidula fornicata is a gastropod mollusc that colonises areas of broken ground and competes with benthic habitats. It is an ecological dead end in that little preys upon it and it creates a mass of shell and faecal material that can smother areas of seabed.

### 4.4 - Physical components

#### 4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
C: Moist Mid-Latitude climate with mild winters	Cfb: Marine west coast (Mild with no dry season, warm summer)

#### 4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres)

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)

- Entire river basin
- Upper part of river basin
- Middle part of river basin
- Lower part of river basin
- More than one river basin
- Not in river basin
- Coastal

Please name the river basin or basins. If the site lies in a sub-basin, please also name the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.

The site is an offshore reef system located in the English Channel, in the NE Atlantic Ocean.

#### 4.4.3 - Soil

Mineral

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change  Increase  Decrease  Unknown

No available information

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes  No

Please provide further information on the soil (optional)

The terrestrial part of the site includes a small area that is covered by soil, mostly on Maître Ile. Recent monitoring suggests that the area covered by soil is stable.

#### 4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Usually permanent water present	No change

Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source	Changes at RIS update
Marine water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Water destination

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Marine	No change

Stability of water regime

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Water levels fluctuating (including tidal)	No change

Please add any comments on the water regime and its determinants (if relevant). Use this box to explain sites with complex hydrology:

The tidal range is 13m.

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Significant transportation of sediments occurs on or through the site

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change  Increase  Decrease  Unknown

Sediment regime unknown

Please provide further information on sediment (optional):

The marine part of the site has a mobile sediment regime, with some stable seagrass and clam beds. It contains areas of subtidal and tidal mud, sand, shingle and gravel, with some underlying beds of peat and clay.

4.4.6 - Water pH

Circumneutral (pH: 5.5-7.4 )

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change  Increase  Decrease  Unknown

Unknown

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Euhaline/Eusaline (30-40 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change  Increase  Decrease  Unknown

Unknown

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Unknown

Please provide further information on dissolved or suspended nutrients (optional):

The site is offshore with little or no terrestrial influence; nutrient levels have not been measured.

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the site itself: i) broadly similar  ii) significantly different

Surrounding area has greater urbanisation or development

Surrounding area has higher human population density

Surrounding area has more intensive agricultural use

Surrounding area has significantly different land cover or habitat types

Please describe other ways in which the surrounding area is different:

The site is surrounded by open sea, beyond which it is bordered to the east by France, to the south by Jersey, and to the north by the other Channel Islands.

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Provisioning Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Food for humans	Sustenance for humans (e.g., fish, molluscs, grains)	Medium

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Erosion protection	Soil, sediment and nutrient retention	Medium
Climate regulation	Regulation of greenhouse gases, temperature, precipitation and other climactic processes	Medium

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Water sports and activities	High
Recreation and tourism	Nature observation and nature-based tourism	High
Recreation and tourism	Recreational hunting and fishing	Medium
Recreation and tourism	Picnics, outings, touring	High
Spiritual and inspirational	Aesthetic and sense of place values	High
Spiritual and inspirational	Cultural heritage (historical and archaeological)	High
Scientific and educational	Long-term monitoring site	High
Scientific and educational	Important knowledge systems, importance for research (scientific reference area or site)	High

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Biodiversity	Supports a variety of all life forms including plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part	High
Nutrient cycling	Storage, recycling, processing and acquisition of nutrients	High

Optional text box to provide further information

Fishing within the site is of great cultural, social and traditional importance to the population of Jersey. It has been used as an offshore fishing base for several thousand years and continues to support an important commercial fishery for various mixed shellfish and wetfish, including lobster, brown crab, bass, whelk and scallop. Local and visiting fishers frequently use the site for recreational fishing. Potting, low water fishing and angling are the main métiers employed by the recreational fishing sector. There is also some recreational scallop diving and spear fishing.

General recreational boating is also popular with many visitors coming to the site, particularly on summer weekends. The site is frequently used by sailboats, power boats, kayaks and eco-tourists. Water tours (at low tide) and tourist outings are provided. Commercial wildlife watching trips visit the site hoping to see the resident seal population, any of the dolphin species, and the diverse seabird community.

Habitats and topographical features within the site provide for many aspects of environmental resilience and multiple ecosystem services, including:

- sediment and nutrient retention, erosion control and the provision of shelter banks – the reef system with its extensive shingle and sand banks provides shelter to important subtidal habitats and adjacent coastal areas;
- storage, recycling, processing and acquisition of nutrients and carbon;
- regulation of greenhouse gases, temperature, precipitation, carbon and other climactic processes – marine habitats are understood to be vital in the balance of CO2 levels and healthy seagrass and clam beds are increasingly being recognized as key carbon sinks;
- storage, recycling, processing and acquisition of nutrients;
- biochemical and pollution regulation; and
- biological productivity and the provision of nursery and fisheries functions.

The site is regarded as a biodiversity hotspot and probable nursery area for a range of species. It also plays an important role in offering biological resilience to the wider Bay of Granville region.

The site supports historic buildings and archaeological sites exist at the reef. The marine sediments are underlain by peat and clay beds that are of likely archaeological significance. It also forms an important natural laboratory for the study of intertidal and shallow subtidal species and processes; and is used for monitoring of regional bird populations.

Within the site:

Outside the site:

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes  No  Unknown

Where economic studies or assessments of economic valuation have been undertaken at the site, it would be helpful to provide information on where the results of such studies may be located (e.g. website links, citation of published literature):

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

i) the site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland

ii) the site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland

Description if applicable

iii) the ecological character of the wetland depends on its interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples

iv) relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland

#### 4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

## 5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

### 5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

#### 5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Public ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
National/Federal government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Private ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other types of private/individual owner(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Provide further information on the land tenure / ownership regime (optional):

The site is British Crown Land. Only the fishing huts within the site are privately owned. Below chart datum the seabed was gifted to the States of Jersey in 2015 by the crown and is retained in public ownership by the island of Jersey.

#### 5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:

Department of the Environment, Government of Jersey

Provide the name and/or title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Paul Chambers, Assistant Director, Marine Resources & Dr T du Feu, Head of Land Resource Management

Postal address:

Howard Davis Farm, La Route de la Trinité, Jersey JE3 5JP, Channel Islands

E-mail address:

f.binney@gov.je

### 5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

#### 5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Water regulation

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Dredging	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	decrease	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Transportation and service corridors

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Shipping lanes		Low impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Aircraft flight paths		Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Biological resource use

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Human intrusions and disturbance

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Recreational and tourism activities	High impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Invasive and other problematic species and genes

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Invasive non-native/ alien species	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	increase	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	increase

Climate change and severe weather

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Habitat shifting and alteration	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Storms and flooding	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Please describe any other threats (optional):

The main threats are posed by dredging leading to disturbance of marine habitats; pollution (noting that The English Channel is one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, with ships carrying all types of cargoes); over-fishing and harvesting of other aquatic resources; erosion and disturbance of breeding bird species from recreation and tourism; invasive non-native species; and climate change resulting in increased storms and habitat and species loss.

### 5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

#### Regional (international) legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Other international designation	Les Minquiers Marine Protected Area (OSPAR)	<a href="https://mpa.ospar.org/home-ospar/mpa-datasheets">https://mpa.ospar.org/home-ospar/mpa-datasheets</a>	whole

#### National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Areas of Special Protection	Area of Special Protection: breeding area on Maitr'île and the surrounding area	<a href="https://www.jerseylaw.je/laws/enacted/Pages/RO-047-2022.aspx">https://www.jerseylaw.je/laws/enacted/Pages/RO-047-2022.aspx</a>	partly

#### Non-statutory designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Other non-statutory designation	Les Minquiers No Mobile Fishing Gear Zone		whole
Other non-statutory designation	Les Minquiers Parlour Pot Restriction Zone	<a href="https://www.jerseylaw.je/laws/current/Pages/14.825.48.aspx">https://www.jerseylaw.je/laws/current/Pages/14.825.48.aspx</a>	partly

### 5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

- Ia Strict Nature Reserve
- Ib Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection
- II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation
- III Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features
- IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention
- V Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation
- VI Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

### 5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

#### Legal protection

Measures	Status
Legal protection	Partially implemented

#### Species

Measures	Status
Control of invasive alien animals	Implemented
Control of invasive alien plants	Implemented
Threatened/rare species management programmes	Implemented

#### Human Activities

Measures	Status
Research	Partially implemented
Harvest controls/poaching enforcement	Implemented
Fisheries management/regulation	Implemented
Regulation/management of recreational activities	Implemented

Other:



The site was designated as an OSPAR Marine Protected Area in 2018. In addition, part of the site was designated as an Area of Special Protection (ASP) in 2023 under the Wildlife (Areas of Special Protection) (Jersey) Order 2022; this provides protection to breeding activities, nesting and young of wild birds, including Common tern, European shag, Great cormorant and Great black-backed gull. Access to defined breeding areas is restricted and certain activities are banned to avoid disturbing nesting birds during the breeding season (1 February to 31 August).

Other species protected under the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021 are listed in Table 3.3. This Law prohibits the deliberate or reckless killing, capture or disturbance of most protected wild birds, and damage or destruction of their nests and eggs or their breeding or resting sites. It also prohibits the release into the wild of any wild animal, wild bird or wild plant, including non-native species, save for a few exceptions and unless in accordance with a licence to do so.

A code of conduct has been prepared for the site (see <http://www.ci-ramsar.com/code-of-conduct/>), which gives advice to visitors on how best to preserve the wildlife and environment when visiting the area.

Species specific regulations are in place to control the harvesting of marine fauna and flora including bag limits for seaweed, fish and shellfish. There are also species specific regulations and permit schemes to control the size of animals that can be taken and the seasons in which they can be harvested.

### 5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? Yes

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes  No

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning processes with another Contracting Party? Yes  No

### 5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? No, the site has already been restored

### 5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Birds	Implemented
Animal species (please specify)	Implemented
Animal community	Implemented
Water quality	Implemented
Plant community	Proposed
Plant species	Proposed

Animal monitoring includes lobsters, crabs and birds.

## 6 - Additional material

### 6.1 - Additional reports and documents

#### 6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

Anon. (1997) Anthropogenic radionuclides in the region of Jersey. Southampton Oceanography Centre, Geosciences Division, unpublished report to States of Jersey.

Bishop, A.C. & 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).

Chambers, P., Binney, F. and Jeffreys, G. (2016) Les Minquiers – A Natural History. Charonia Press.

Critchley, A.T., Farnham, W.F. & Morrell, S.L. (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.

Culley, M., Farnham, W., Fletcher, R. and Thorp, C. (1996) The marine ecology of Maitresse Ile, Les Minquiers. University of Portsmouth, Marine Laboratory, unpublished report to States of Jersey.

Culley, M.B. (1979) An investigation into some aspects of the fisheries of Jersey. University of Portsmouth, Marine Laboratory, unpublished report to States of Jersey.

Farnham, W.F. (1991) Marine fauna of Jersey. University of Portsmouth, Marine Laboratory, unpublished report to States of Jersey.

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).

IUCN (2022) The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

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.

Les Minquiers, Jersey, Ramsar Information Sheet UK23002. Version 3.0, 13/06/2008, produced by JNCC.

Orbi, A. and Salomon, J.-C. (1988) Dynamique de marée dans le Golfe Normand-Breton. *Oceanologica Acta*, 11(1), 55-64.

States of Jersey Department of the Environment (2012) Les Minquiers Ramsar Management Plan. Dated February 2012.

Taylor, P.D. and Cook, P.L. (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.

Young, H.G., Dryden, M. & Pinel, J. (2011) Conservation Status of Jersey's Birds: Jersey's bird populations in the 21st Century. Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, Jersey.

Channel Island Ramsar Code of Conduct webpage: <http://www.ci-ramsar.com/code-of-conduct/>  
 Jersey Government fish and shellfish regulations and monitoring webpage:  
<https://www.gov.je/Environment/LandMarineWildlife/FishShellfish/Pages/index.aspx>

#### 6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

<no file available>

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

<no file available>

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

<1 file(s) uploaded>

vi. other published literature

<1 file(s) uploaded>

#### 6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



View of Maitresse Ile, Les Minquiers Ramsar Site ( Department of the Environment, Government of Jersey, 2012 )

#### 6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation